THE WORKS OF *Mr.* HENRY NEEDLER.

Nemo parum diu vixit, qui Virtutis perfectæ perfecto functus est munere.

Cicero de contemnenda Morte.

LONDON:
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M DCC XXIV.

BRITISH MUSEUM
SEP
88

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

LORD *CARTERET*,

HIS MAJESTY'S

Principal SECRETARY of State,

This COLLECTION *is*,

With all Deference, inſcrib'd by

his Lordſhip's

moſt Obedient, and

moſt Humble Servant,

William Duncombe.

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THE PREFACE.

MR. *Henry Needler* was born at *Horley*, in *Surrey*, in the Year 1690; and educated in a private School at *Reygate* in the ſame County. He was remov'd from thence in 1705; and, in 1708, accepted a ſmall Place in a Publick Office; where he continu'd the Remainder of his Days.

Haud facile emergunt, quorum virtutibus obſtat
Res anguſta domi. Juvenal.

About this time contracting a Friendſhip with a Gentleman of a like Taſte, who

furniſh'd him with proper Books, he apply'd himſelf, at his Intervals of Leiſure, to reading the *Claſſicks*, and to the Study of *Logick*, *Metaphyſicks*, and the *Mathematicks*, with which laſt he was peculiarly delighted: And in a few Years, by the Force of his own happy Genius and aſſiduous Induſtry, without the Aſſiſtance of any Maſter, he acquir'd a conſiderable Knowledge in the moſt difficult Branches of thoſe uſeful and entertaining Studies.

By ſo cloſe an Application, he contracted a violent Pain in his Head, which, notwithſtanding the beſt Advice, daily increas'd. This, and other unfortunate Circumſtances concurring, ſo deeply affected him; who beſides had even in his Conſtitution a ſtrong Tincture of Melancholy; that he was at laſt brought under an almoſt total Suſpenſion of Reaſon. In this Condition he fell into a Fever: And, as there was before ſcarce any Hopes of his Recovery, it may be ſaid to have happily put an end to the deplorable

rable Bondage of ſo bright a Mind; on the 21ſt of *December* 1718; and in the 29th Year of his Age. He was buried in the Church of *Frindsbury*, near *Rocheſter*.

Mr. *Needler*'s whole Life was influenc'd by Principles of ſincere unaffected Piety and Virtue: And as his Morals were unblemiſh'd, ſo he was full of the Hopes of a bleſſed Immortality. On all proper Occaſions, he was a ſtrenuous Advocate for univerſal Toleration and Forbearance in Matters of Religion; rightly ſuppoſing, that no Service can be acceptable to the Supreme Being, unleſs it proceeds from the Heart; and that Force tends only to make Hypocrites, but adds no new Light to the Underſtanding. He was modeſt to a Fault; entertaining the moſt humble Opinion of his own Performances; and was always ready to do Juſtice to thoſe of others. His Affection for his Friends indeed ſometimes biaſs'd his Judgment, and led him to the commending their Writings beyond their

Merit. It is hop'd, the Reader will forgive the Inſtances of this kind in the following Sheets, as well as any leſſer Faults and Inaccuracies of Style; conſidering they were deſign'd by the Author for the Entertainment only of ſome ſelect Friends, and that he liv'd not to correct 'em.

I may, with the utmoſt Truth and Juſtice, apply to him theſe beautiful Lines by Mr. *Smith*, in his Poem to the Memory of Mr. *Philips*;

Whom ſhall I find unbiaſs'd in Diſpute,
Still fond *to learn*, not eager *to confute?*
To whom the Labours of my Soul diſcloſe,
Reveal my Pleaſure, or diſcharge my Woes?
Oh! in this faithful *Youth for ever ends*
The beſt of Sons, of Brothers, and of Friends.

That which may be thought moſt to ſtand in need of Apology, is the inſerting private Letters in this Collection. It is well known, the *French* have publiſh'd Volumes of Epiſtles loaded with Compliments. The *Engliſh*, in order to avoid this

this Error, have run perhaps too far into the other Extreme; at leaſt, I apprehend, that ſuch as contain Moral or Philoſophical Diſſertations, ſhou'd not, merely becauſe they have this Form, be rejected; ſince it ſeems almoſt indifferent, whether they be publiſh'd under the Title of *Epiſtles* or *Eſſays*.

It may be proper to obſerve, that one fine Poem, which has been attributed to another Hand, is here reſtor'd to its Genuine Author.

If I ſhou'd be thought, by Any, too copious in Praiſe of a Perſon, who liv'd and died obſcurely; I perſuade myſelf, that an Error of Friendſhip will be eaſily pardon'd by all thoſe, whoſe Breaſts have been ever warm'd with that Divine Paſſion.

The following Letter was written, while Mr. *Needler* was languiſhing under his laſt fatal Illneſs. If the Gentleman, to whom it was addreſs'd, wou'd have undertaken this Task, theſe Pieces wou'd have appear'd with much more Advantage.

tage. But as he is engag'd in a Work of greater Importance, this was reſerv'd for me.

That the Letter remains in its Original Form, will not be diſagreeable to any, who chuſe rather to ſee things in their natural Force and Simplicity, than merely regular.

To Mr. *HUGHES.*

Woolwich, *February* 24, 1717.

Dear SIR,

WAlking lately in a penſive Humour by the River-ſide, while the Billows were rowling at my Feet, and the Wind whiſtling thro' the neighbouring Trees; the Idea of our unfortunate Friend, among a Variety of melancholy Objects, offer'd itſelf to my Thoughts; whom I was always wont to think of, with extreme Pleaſure; but now, O ſad Viciſſitude! can never remember without the utmoſt Anguiſh of Heart.

Thou didſt in vain (thought I,) *employ ſo many ſolitary Hours in the Purſuit of Knowledge!*

ledge! Thou didſt in vain riſe up early, and watch 'till Midnight, in order to enrich thy Mind with the ſublimeſt Notions! Thou didſt in vain ſearch out the Secrets of Nature, and pry into the Laws, by which the mighty Maker of the World directs his Actions; ſince thou haſt no ſooner obtain'd the Object of thy Wiſhes, but the dear Purchaſe *is raviſh'd from thee, and all thy exalted Speculations are ſcatter'd into Air!*

Surely Man is made in vain! He reſtleſsly moves about for a few Years; and then (as it were,) vaniſhes, and is forgot: Thus a watry Bubble ſhines with Variety of gaudy Colours, but is broke by the leaſt Breath of Wind.

Before the Stateſman *can put his projected Schemes in Execution; the* Naturaliſt *go through his intended Experiments; or the* Mathematician *conquer his ſtubborn Problems; they are either immaturely ſnatch'd away; or elſe their Heads perhaps are diſorder'd, and their Judgments ſhatter'd and broken; and thus the whole Frame of their glorious Deſigns is daſh'd in Pieces! How*

(ſaid

(*ſaid* I) *can it conſiſt with infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs, to create a Being with ſuch excellent Endowments and Faculties*; *and then to cut him down, while he is yet green, and has not had Leiſure to improve his Powers, or to bring any thing to Perfection? Does it not look like ſporting with the Miſeries of his Creatures, to give them juſt a Glimpſe of Happineſs, and then to plunge them into Darkneſs?*

Thus I ſhou'd have gone on complaining, had I not corrected theſe haſty Thoughts by the Conſideration; *That this World is only the* Nurſery for a better; *and that if we act, during the ſhort term of this fleeting Life, agreeably to the Will of that wiſe Being who has placed us here, we ſhall ſpeedily "be tranſplanted into a more friendly Cli-"mate, where we ſhall ſpread and flouriſh "to all Eternity."*

Though Here,

The Ways of Heaven ſeem dark and intricate;

There, all our Difficulties ſhall be reſolv'd; *and the whole Scheme of Providence*

appear

appear to be the Work of perfect Goodneſs and conſummate Wiſdom. We are apt fondly to over-rate theſe tranſient Sufferings, deluded by our vain Imaginations: But that Incomprehenſible Being, who beholds at once all things paſt, preſent and future, forms a very different Judgment concerning 'em. For what Proportion can there indeed be, between Time and Eternity? Or what can be more juſt than the Reaſoning of the Apoſtle, were it merely regarded as the Argument of a Philoſopher? For I reckon, that the Sufferings of this preſent Time, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which ſhall be revealed in us. *Rom.* viii. 18.

I conſider'd further; That GOD *muſt be conceiv'd acting as a Wiſe, as well as Merciful Being; and that therefore he proceeds by General Laws, and the moſt Compendious Methods; which, tho' they may ſometimes ſeem to occaſion leſſer Irregularities, yet, upon the Whole, exalt the Divine Attributes the moſt magnificently.*

By theſe Reflections I allay'd, in ſome meaſure, the Workings of my troubled Thoughts:

But,

But, if a violent Grief may ever be juſtified, the melancholy Condition of ſo valuable a Man and faithful Friend, may ſurely claim the utmoſt Tranſports! He was a diligent and unbiaſs'd Searcher after Truth; always willing to ſubmit to its Convictions, even to the Deſtruction of his own Opinions; *as* Ariſtotle *rightly teaches, a Philoſopher ought. Indeed by an over-eager Application to the Study of the* Mathematicks, (*without Intermiſſion or any Recreation,*) *he increas'd at leaſt the Pain, which, I greatly fear, will prove fatal to him! Let not, however,* Philoſophy *ſuffer for the Indiſcretion of any of her Votaries. The* Tree of Knowledge *now yields Fruit both pleaſant to the Taſte, and uſeful for Life; tho' it may be unwarily converted into Poiſon, and prove our Deſtruction.*

The Reflection on Mr. Needler's *unhappy Fate may be a Warning to others, not to indulge themſelves with too much Eagerneſs even in the Purſuit of Knowledge it-ſelf; but ſometimes to unbend their Minds by innocent Amuſements; conſidering that this World*

is

is deſign'd for Action, rather than Speculation.

I intend to put his Papers into your Hands; and, as I think it no leſs becomes us to be careful of the Intellectual Offspring, than it wou'd to cheriſh the Orphan of a Friend, I hope and expect from your Affection for him, that, at a proper Opportunity, you will improve upon theſe Hints, and do Juſtice to his Memory. His pious Sentiments, Humanity, and Poetical Genius will ſufficiently appear by his own Writings; but the great Improvement he made in ſo ſhort a Compaſs of Time ought not to be forgotten.

I am with all Sincerity,

SIR,

Your moſt affectionate, and

faithful humble Servant,

Wm DUNCOMBE.

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ERRATA.

Page	Verſe	*for*	*read*
12.	5.	Mead, prepare,	Mead prepare,
29.	5.	reſtore:	reſtore,
38.	*ult.*	Notes	Voice
p.	Line		
72.	13.	unſtahomable	unfathomable
144.	10.	Scheuckzer	Scheuchzer
172.	12.	muſt as	muſt *be utter'd* as
182.	7.	that, as	that as,
199.	6, in the Note.	ſligh	ſlight

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POEMS

POEMS
ON
Several OCCASIONS.

HORACE. *Book I. Ode VIII.*

To *LYDIA.*

SAY, *Lydia*, by the Gods I beg you, Say,
Why you by Love's bewitching Arts betray
Young *Sybaris?* Why ſeek you to deſtroy
His Virtue by the ſoft Unmanly Joy?
Why does he now the duſty *Circus* ſhun,
No longer patient of the ſcorching Sun?

Why does he ceaſe, among the Martial Train,
To curb the *Gallic* Steed with foamy Rein?
To ſwim in *Tyber*'s yellow Flood forbear,
And more than Vipers Blood, the Wreſtler's Ointment fear?
Why, from the Quoit or Dart's ſucceſsful Fling,
Wins he no Praiſes from the ſhouting Ring?
Why, like *Achilles*, when the *Grecian* Band
Prepar'd to ſail for *Troy*'s unhappy Strand,
Skulks he at home, neglectful of his Fame,
Diſſolv'd in Sloth and Love's inglorious Flame?

HORACE.

Book I. Ode XXVI. Imitated.

THE Poet's Brow, that ſacred Laurel wears,
Shou'd always be ſerene, and free from Cares;
Jocund and chearful, each revolving Day;
Smooth as his Verſe, and as his Fancy gay!
Say, how can it affect my Muſe and Me,
Whether the *Turk* and *Muſcovite* agree;

In

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In the laſt Fight, what num'rous Bands were ſlain;
And who the Vict'ry got, the *Swede* or *Dane*?
Or why ſhou'd I, with anxious Thoughts and Cares
Perplex my Mind, for other Mens Affairs?
Give Me of gen'rous Wine a copious Bowl,
To drown my Sorrows, and exalt my Soul:
Then, by th' Aſſiſtance of th' inſpiring Juice,
My Muſe may hope her Numbers to produce,
In ſuch an eaſy unaffected Strain,
As may from skilful *Strephon* Pardon gain.

HORACE.

Book I. Ode XXXI.

To *APOLLO.*

WHAT does the Poet of his God deſire?
What Boon at great *Apollo*'s Shrine require,
Whilſt with new Wine a brimming Bowl he fills,
And on the Floor the grateful Off'ring ſpills?

Not the large Crops of fair *Sardinia*'s Soil, [Toil;
Whoſe bounteous Glebe ſcarce needs the Tiller's
Nor Herds, which warm *Calabria*'s Meadows feed;
Nor Courſers, which her fertile Paſtures breed:
Not that far *India* may his Pride ſupply
With burniſh'd Gold, and poliſh'd Ebony;
Nor lands, where *Liris*' ſilent Waters ſtray,
And gliding ſteal inſenſibly away.
Let thoſe, whom Fortune's kinder Favours bleſs,
From the ripe Grape the racy Liquor preſs;
Let the rich Merchant, (who has plow'd the Main,
And Danger in all Shapes ſurvey'd for Gain;
Whom the propitious Gods indulgent Aid
Has ſafely to *Saturnia*'s Ports convey'd,)
Drink with his jovial Friends ambroſial Wine,
In Goblets that with golden Luſtre ſhine;
Whilſt Me, who theſe vain Luxuries deſpiſe,
Olives and Herbs, plain homely Fare, ſuffice.
Grant Me, O *Phœbus!* but this One Requeſt,
(For, this obtaining, I'm of All poſſeſt)
That I may, ſound in Body and in Mind,
Whilſt Age allows theſe Bleſſings to Mankind,

In

In tuneful Songs my careleſs Hours employ,
And my low Fate contentedly enjoy.

HORACE.

Book IV. Ode III.

To *MELPOMENE.*

THE Man whom at his Birth the ſmiling Muſe
Does with a true Poetic Vein infuſe,
O'er whoſe Nativity ſuch Planets burn,
As give his Soul a ſoft and tuneful Turn,
Shall never by Succeſs at th' *Iſthmian* Game
Be made the Subject of loquacious Fame;
Him no fleet Courſers with impetuous Pace
Shall ever draw Victorious in the Race;
Succeſs in War o'er *Rome*'s imperious Foes
With ſacred Laurel ne'er ſhall crown his Brows.

But lofty Shades, and *Tyber*'s fertile Stream,
Sung in ſweet Lyrics, gentle as his Theme,

Immortal Lays and Poeſy Divine,
To deathleſs Glory ſhall his Name conſign.

Rome's poliſh'd Sons vouchſafe my Songs to praiſe,
And grace my Temples with applauding Bays:
Vain Envy now begins to quit the Field,
And to the common Vote Unwilling yield.

O skilful Muſe! who tun'ſt the warbling Lyre,
And cou'dſt the ſilent Tribe of Fiſh inſpire,
With Notes as ſweet, as from the parting Breath
Of dying Swans ſalute approaching Death;
To Thee I owe this Honour, from the Throng
That all obſerve me as I paſs along,
That each his Friend with pointed Finger ſhows,
And crys, There *Horace* the fam'd Poet goes:
My very Life preſerv'd by Thee I own,
And whate'er Praiſe I ſhare, is Thine alone.

HORACE.

Book IV. Ode VII. Paraphras'd.

SEE! Spring's return'd; the budding Leaves appear,
And blooming Flow'rs adorn the new-born Year;
The Hills their hoary Robes of fleecy Snow
Throw off, and clad in chearful Verdure ſhow:
The Silver Floods contract their ebbing Tide, [glide.
And with abated Streams in narrower Channels
Now gentle Gales invite the Nymphs and Swains,
To trip in ruſtic Dances o'er the Plains;
The joyous Birds their tuneful Ditties ſing,
And with glad Notes ſalute the ſmiling Spring.

The winged Hours, that meaſure out the Day,
Admoniſh us of mould'ring Life's Decay,
And prompt us to enjoy it while we may.

Soft *Vernal* Warmth the Winter's Cold ſucceeds;
Then *Summer*'s ſcorching Heat deforms the Meads;

Next *Autumn* crowns with golden Sheaves the
Fields,
'Till to fierce *Winter*'s Rage his Empire yields.

Thus all things change in a ſucceſſive Round,
And nothing long in the ſame State is found.
The Seaſons paſs away, but come again;
Nor *Spring*, nor *Winter* holds Eternal Reign:
But we, when once diſpatch'd to Shades below,
For Ever no Return to Light muſt know.
The Gates of Death do freely all receive,
But no Regreſs, to thoſe that enter, give.
How ſoon our Lot may fall, there's none can ſay,
Perhaps our laſt, may be this preſent Day.

Whatever with penurious Mind you ſpare,
Will only ſerve t'enrich a greedy Heir.
When once th' inevitable Hour is come,
At which thou muſt receive thy final Doom;
Thy Noble Birth, thy Eloquence Divine,
And ſhining Piety ſhall nought encline

The

The ſtubborn Will of unrelenting Fate,
To give thy fleeting Life a longer Date:
Thy weak Attempts will all be found in vain,
To change the fixt Decree, or a Reprieve to gain.

The GOLDEN AGE.

Tranſlated from the Firſt Book of *Ovid*'s *Metamorphoſes.*

THE happy Times, that firſt on Mortals ſmil'd
In the World's Infant Age, were Golden ſtil'd;
Unaw'd by Rulers, nor by Laws reſtrain'd,
They then from Ill ſpontaneouſly refrain'd,
And Nature's ſacred Rights invi'lably maintain'd:
No threat'ning Words, on brazen Tables read,
Denounc'd juſt Vengeance on the guilty Head.
The Pine, as yet for lofty Maſts unhew'd,
Secure upon its Native Mountain ſtood,
Nor e'er had floated on the briny Flood.

Beyond

Beyond the Seas, no foreign Lands they ſought,
And their own Shores, Earth's utmoſt Limits thought.
No circling Motes th' unguarded Towns ſurround,
Nor yet was heard the Trumpet's Martial Sound.
In War not practis'd, nor with Arms prepar'd,
No hoſtile Wrongs the peaceful Nations fear'd.
The bounteous Glebe, unwounded with the Plough,
Did of its own accord its Gifts allow.
The frugal Race, content with what the Earth
Gave of her ſelf by a ſpontaneous Birth,
Wild Cherries and wild Apples of the Field,
With fragrant Strawberries the Mountains yield,
And Acrons, that the Oak's broad Branches bear,
Gather'd for Food, and thought no homely Fare.
Th' unlabour'd Land with bending Ears was crown'd;
And ſmiling Plenty grace'd the fertile Ground.
Spring Ever reign'd; and balmy Breezes fann'd
Delightful Flow'rs, thick-ſtrew'd by Nature's Hand.
Rivers of Milk and Nectar then did flow,
And yellow Honey drop'd from every Bough.

MAR-

MARTIAL.

Book I. Epigram LVI. Paraphras'd.

To *FRONTO.*

SINCE, Noble *Fronto*, you to know deſire,
How high the Wiſhes of your Friend aſpire,
The Sum of all his Pray'rs and Wiſhes, He
Will give you here in ſhort; for few they be.
This firſt he asks, that He, ſecure from Harm,
May own and cultivate ſome little Farm,
Where, in ſoft Quiet and inglorious Reſt,
He with an humble Fortune may be bleſt.
Can any one prefer a ſlaviſh State,
And daily tend the Levees of the Great,
Who with his Dog and Gun may freely rove
About his fertile Fields and happy Grove;
And there the little feather'd Thieves deſtroy,
That cull his Cherries, and his Corn annoy;
And, Home return'd, appeaſe with Game he brings
The wholeſome Hunger that from Labour ſprings:

Or,

Or, when the tepid Vernal Gales invite
The finny Tenants of the Brook to bite,
In noted Haunts his baited Fiſh-hooks lay,
And with his trembling Rod pull out the skipping [Prey:
Or with delicious Honey Mead, prepare
The Gods to their own Nectar might prefer;
Feed on ſuch Cates, as his own Fields afford,
And with freſh unbought Dainties crown his Board?

The Man, who hates me moſt, ye Gods! I ſwear,
I wiſh, no greater Curſe than this to bear,
That he may likewiſe hate this kind of Life,
And ſpend his Days, in Hurry, Noiſe and Strife.

MARTIAL.

Book X. Epigram XLVII. Paraphras'd.

To *Julius Martial.*

SINCE, Deareſt *Martial*, you of Me inquire,
What things we ought to ſeek, and what deſire,

This

This ſhort, yet faithful Inventory take,
Of thoſe which Life compleatly happy make.
An unincumber'd Income, which ſhou'd be
Not owing to our own, but Parents Induſtry:
A little Farm, yet of a fertile Soil,
And not ungrateful to the Tiller's Toil:
A cleanly Hearth; a Fire which never dies,
Recruited by a neighb'ring Wood's Supplies:
A Soul Serene, with no Contentions vex'd,
And with few buſy burd'ning Cares perplex'd:
A Body bleſt with Health, with Strength endu'd;
A Temper plain and open, but not rude:
An honeſt Heart, Unknowing to deceive,
Yet circumſpect, nor eaſie to believe:
A Friendſhip built (as if by Heav'n deſign'd)
On Likeneſs both of Fortune and of Mind:
A Table ſpread with ſuch cheap homely Fare,
As our own cultivated Gardens bear:
At Night, a mod'rate Bowl, with Nectar fraught,
T' exhilerate, not drown, the penſive Thought:
A chaſte, yet chearful Wife, in whom ſhou'd meet
Unſulli'd Virtue with a Humour ſweet:

Sound Sleep, whoſe kind Deluſion may unite
The Shades of Ev'ning to the Morning-Light:
Peace and Contentment with our preſent State;
To reliſh Life, tho' not afraid of Fate.

From *SENECA.*

ALL muſt ſubmit to *Time*'s deſpotic Pow'r;
All, firſt or laſt, his Glutton-Jaws devour.
Nought a ſecure and ſettled Baſis knows,
But all, at length, his mighty Hand o'erthrows.
Rivers forget to flow: the growing Shore
Now naked lies, where Ocean reign'd before:
High Mountains ſink, and ancient Hills ſubſide,
Or whelm the Vallies with their ruin'd Pride.
Why do I name theſe leſſer things below?
Yon' Orbs, that with unnumber'd Splendors glow,
Not long ſhall on their ſteady Axes turn,
Ere, ſeiz'd by their own Native Fires, they burn.
No partial Wrong we undergo by Death;
'Tis Nature's Law, we ſhou'd reſign our Breath.

Death

Death claims a right to All; the Time will come,
When *Chaos* ſhall his ancient Reign reſume.

EPITAPH.

From *CLAUDIAN.*

TO great and beauteous things, a tranſient Date
And ſudden Downfal is decreed by Fate:
Witneſs the Fair, that Here in Silence lies,
Whom *Venus* might have view'd with envious Eyes.

LEARNED IGNORANCE.

Tranſlated from *GROTIUS.*

NAture ordains, whilſt here we dwell below,
That much we ſhould admire, and little know;
In ſecret Labyrinths her ſelf ſhe hides,
And our defeated Cares and fruitleſs Search derides.

The

The curious Man, who with Ambition vain
Would All within his narrow Mind contain;
Who, with a greedy luſt of Knowledge fraught,
Diſdains of his own Ignorance the Thought,
Beyond the Lot of Human-Kind aſpires,
And fondly things Impoſſible deſires.
Where this firſt Error can Admiſſion gain,
It draws of worſe Miſtakes a fatal Train;
For He, who raſhly will of All decide,
Muſt oft' with Falſhood ſooth his learned Pride,
Ixion-like thin Clouds of Error chace,
And Shadows claſp in his deceiv'd Embrace.
Far more ſecure and peaceful is the Mind,
Whoſe Search, to plain and uſeful Truths confin'd,
Does dark uncertain Subtilties deſpiſe,
Nor cares to follow what the Seeker flies.
The Wilful Ignorance of trivial things
From Wiſdom oft', and well-poiz'd Judgment ſprings.

To

To SLEEP.

PRopitious Pow'r! to wretched Mortals kind,
Who, not content to ſooth the penſive Mind
With ſoft Repoſe, do'ſt ſplendidly delight,
With rich Ideal Scenes, our Intellectual Sight.
Oft', while within thy downy Arms careſs'd
The lumpiſh Body takes refreſhing Reſt,
Free'd from its earthly Charge, the wakeful Soul
Viſits the Stars, and ranges o'er the Pole,
To diſtant Worlds with nimble Pinions flies,
And climbs with eaſie Steps the ſteepy Skies.

While bluſt'ring Winds around my Chamber blow,
And all the neighb'ring Fields lie hid in Snow,
Whilſt uncontroll'd, tempeſtuous Winter reigns,
And ſtrips of all their bloomy Pride the Plains;
Wafted by Thee, to happier Climes I ſtray,
With purple Spring and verd'rous Beauty, gay;
Where lightly skimming thro' mild Air, I rove
O'er the green Meadows and enchanted Grove.

OF THE CAUSES *of* DREAMS.

DRreams, which in Sleep their various Scenes diſplay,
And mimick the Tranſactions of the Day,
Nor from th' Omniſcient Pow'rs above deſcend,
Nor future Good preſage, nor Ill portend,
Nor the conceal'd Decrees of Fate foreſhow,
But from our waking Thoughts mechanically flow.

For Nature by fix'd Laws has wiſely join'd
The bright Ideas of the conſcious Mind
To Motions of the liquid ſpirit'ous Train,
Thro' previous Traces of the humid Brain;
Theſe, when the Soul by drowſy Sleep oppreſs'd
Into her private Cell retires to Reſt,
Thro' beaten Paths their wand'ring Courſes take,
And Images confus'd of things awake.

AN

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH *of a* TABBY-CAT.

ALAS! poor Tabby's dead! who can deny
On Tabby's Death to write an Elegy?
Whoſe uſeful Merit in ſuch various Ways
Deſerves the juſt Remembrance of our Lays;
Who by her watchful Care, while others ſlept,
Secure from thieviſh Mice the Pantry kept;
And by her purring Song and wanton Play,
Solac'd the Winter-Nights, and drove ſad Thoughts away.
But what, alas! can Songs or Wiles avail,
When Death does with his mortal Dart aſſail?
What Muſick can his ſullen Ear delight?
What Swiftneſs can preſerve by nimble Flight?
Now on the Hearth, methinks, I ſee her ſit,
With Mein Majeſtick and with ſolemn State;

A Royal Robe of ſable Furr ſhe wears,
And ſpotted Ermin on her Boſom bears,
While in the Mint of her projecting Mind,
Againſt the Mice, deep Stratagems are coin'd.
Her Death let all the purring Race attend,
And mourn in Mews and Catterwauls her End;
With ſolemn Rites, each Night, ſurround her Grave,
And her lov'd Mem'ry from Oblivion ſave.

On the DEATH of *LESBIA*'s GREEN-BIRD.

AH hapleſs Bird! has then untimely Death
Silenc'd thy Throat, and ſtopp'd thy tuneful Breath?
No more thy Plumes their faded Verdure boaſt,
Dim are thy little Eyes, and all their Luſtre loſt!
No longer muſt thy chearful Notes delight
Fair *Lesbia*'s Ear; thy beauteous Form, her Sight;

No

No more will ſhe each Morn, with pleaſing Care,
Freſh Food for Thee, and fragrant Greens prepare,
Whilſt flutt'ring Wings and brisker Chirps confeſs
Thy riſing Joy, and grateful Thanks expreſs.
Proud to be tended by a Hand ſo fair,
Well-pleas'd Thou Loſs of Liberty cou'd'ſt bear,
Nor envy'd'ſt other Birds, that range in open Air.
Thee, chief Muſician of her feather'd Quire,
Fair *Lesbia* held, Thee moſt ſhe did admire:
Oft' wou'd ſhe praiſe thy ſweet harmonious Lay,
And liſten to thy Song the live-long Day.
Moan all ye Birds of *Lesbia*'s Conſort, moan
In doleful Notes your warbling Partner gone:
Let Wreaths of Night-ſhade and of baleful Yeugh
Each Cage adorn, or Sprigs of Cypreſs ſtrew.
This Theme let every tender Poet chuſe;
Let *Lesbia*'s Loſs employ each gentle Muſe;
Henceforth let None *Corinna*'s Parrot name,
But *Lesbia*'s Green-Bird fill the Trump of Fame.

A

SEA-PIECE.

Sent in a Letter from Portſmouth, *in* October, 1711.

WHEN ſtormy Winds in Northern Caverns ſleep,
Nor with tempeſtuous Blaſts diſturb the Deep,
A ſmooth unwrinkled Plain accoſts the Eye,
Which ſeems to meet and reach the bending Sky;
One Even, Uniform, Unvari'd Scene
On ev'ry Side extends its wat'ry Green,
A ſpacious Field, which leaves the Sight behind
By Nature to a nearer Bound confin'd.
But Here no Rocks the foaming Billows lave;
No craggy Cliffs impend the breaking Wave;
The winding Shore a level Proſpect yields
Of verdant Meadows and of fruitful Fields.

When firſt a Ship, that Monſter of the Flood,
(By ſimple *Indians* thought ſome thund'ring God)
Within

Within the narrow Verge of Sight appears,
Her tall ſtrait Maſt above the Sea ſhe rears,
Whilſt yet her turgid Hull the Waters hide
And convex Surface of the ſwelling Tide.
The whole Machine a nearer Diſtance ſhows,
And all the Parts, which her fair Frame compoſe;
Proudly ſhe rides in Triumph o'er the Main,
Whoſe briny Waves her ſtately Load ſuſtain;
Her gaudy Streamers flow with wanton Gales,
And proſp'rous Winds diſtend her ſpreading Sails:
With gladden'd Heart the chearful Sailor ſpies
The ſmiling Aſpect of the Seas and Skies;
No Rocks nor Shelves the skilful Pilot fears,
But ſitting at the Helm ſecurely ſteers.

When if a ſudden Storm the Ocean ſweep
With furious Blaſt, and laſh the frothy Deep,
By Tempeſts vext the raging Billows roar,
And daſh their foamy Heads againſt the Shore;
Night all around her ſable Wings extends,
Save where more horrid Day the Lightning lends:

Here rolling Waves in wat'ry Mountains riſe,
And there a dreadful gaping Valley lies.
The trembling Sailor now of Life deſpairs,
And flies to his laſt Refuge, Vows and Pray'rs,
On bended Knees of angry Heav'n implores
To land him ſafely on the Neighb'ring Shores;
In rattling Thunder, Heav'n his Pray'r returns,
And with red Lightning all the Welkin burns;
Each glaring Flaſh the Wretch with Horror views,
And with repeated Cries for Mercy ſues.
From Wave to Wave the bandy'd Veſſel's toſt;
Torn are her Sails, and all her Rigging loſt:
Now 'mongſt the ſtarry Heights ſhe mounting rides,
Down to the loweſt Deep ſhe now ſubſides.
In vain the Men their Strength and Skill employ,
The boiſt'rous Winds their weak Attempts defy;
Unguided, by the driving Storm at laſt
She on ſome Rock or Bank of Sand is caſt:
Th' impetuous Shock her Hull in Pieces breaks,
And fills her hollow Womb with doleful Shrieks;
Now Dread and Horror of impending Fate
Do blackeſt Thoughts in ev'ry Breaſt create;

Some

Some from the Deck forſake the bulging Ship,
And 'midſt the raging Sea for Safety leap.
A few, a very few of theſe, the Beach,
Drove by the Waves on floating Timbers, reach;
The reſt, by the contending Billows toſt,
At length are in the ſwelling Ocean loſt.

Bold was his Soul who made the firſt Eſſay
Upon the Main, and ſhew'd Mankind the Way
To paſs the Limits of their native Shore, [explore:
To viſit diſtant Lands, and unknown Worlds
By Him, we our domeſtic Poverty
Were taught by Foreign Traffick to ſupply;
To ev'ry Part of the whole Globe we roam,
And bring the Riches of each Climate home;
With Northern Furrs we're clad and Eaſtern Gold,
Yet know nor *India*'s Heat, nor *Ruſſia*'s Cold;
We taſte the Wines, that ſultry Soils produce,
Free from the ſcorching Beams, which raiſe the noble Juice;
Knowledge and Plenty fetch from ev'ry Shore,
With Arts our Minds, with Wealth our Coffers ſtore.

The *Britiſh* Race, 'till by the *Romans* led
They firſt the flutt'ring Canvas learn'd to ſpread,
Savage and wild, by Commerce unrefin'd,
Differ'd but little from the Brutal Kind;
Uncultivated, ignorant and rude,
A painted Herd, they rang'd the Plains and Wood,
And prey'd upon their Fellow Brutes for Food:
With Terror often from the neighb'ring Shore
They view'd the ſtormy Waves, and heard them roar,
But never durſt a Thought to entertain,
Of vent'ring on the Surface of the Main:
Beyond the Sea they ſought no Lands unknown,
Nor dream'd of other Climes beſides their own.

A

PASTORAL.

CORYDON and *THYRSIS.*

CORYDON.

HEard'ſt thou the Song which youthful *Damon* play'd
On Yeſter-Morn, beneath yon' Poplar Shade?

THYR-

THYRSIS.

I did,——and ſtill methinks his Voice I hear
With pleaſing Accent ſounding in mine Ear;
In what ſoft Notes, in what a moving Strain,
Sung he *Phileſia*'s Charms, and coy Diſdain!
O cruel Nymph! O hard obdurate Breaſt!
That cou'd the Youth's enchanting Lays reſiſt.
Thou'rt Fair, indeed, as the pure *Scythian* Snow,
But then as cold and unrelenting too.

CORYDON.

The ſympathizing Swains ſtood liſt'ning round,
And catch'd with greedy Ears each falling Sound:
All, but the beauteous Maid, his Verſe attend,
Pity his Paſſion, and his Song commend.
Thus, when the Nightingale with warbling Throat
Trills in the ſhady Bow'rs her mournful Note,
Each meaner Voice thro' the whole Grove is ſtill,
And owns ſweet *Philomel*'s ſuperior Skill.

THYRSIS.

Leſs pleas'd I hear the ruſtling Vernal Breeze
Fly whiſp'ring thro' the Branches of the Trees;

Leſs pleas'd I hear yon' murm'ring chryſtal Spring,
Than to his Vocal Pipe young *Damon* ſing.
Collin, for Song renown'd o'er all the Plain,
Sung not in ſofter Notes his am'rous Pain;
Sure he, when Death untun'd his artful Breath,
To *Damon* did his Pipe and Skill bequeath.

CORYDON.

O that th' indulgent God of Verſe wou'd grant
This Boon to Me, his earneſt Supplicant,
That my low Soul he wou'd vouchſafe t'inſpire
With *Damon*'s Portion of celeſtial Fire;
Then ſhou'd my bolder Muſe no longer brook
The flow'ry Meads, and humble Shepherd's Crook;
A loftier Flight her daring Wing ſhou'd try,
And with the Eagle mount the vaulted Sky;
Then, *Orpheus*-like, ſo ſweetly wou'd I mourn
By cruel Fate *Favonia* from us torn,
(*Favonia!* lov'd by all, by all deplor'd,
With ev'ry Grace adorn'd, and Virtue ſtor'd,)
That ev'n th' infernal ſullen Pow'rs, who wield
Death's rigid Scepter, to my Plaints ſhou'd yield;

Tho'

Tho' hard as Adamant their Boſoms are,
Unmov'd, and deaf to ev'ry Vulgar Pray'r,
The melting Force of my perſuaſive Lays
Such Pity in their flinty Breaſts ſhou'd raiſe,
That they their Captive ſhou'd again reſtore:
And waft her back to the forſaken Shore;
My laſting Numbers ſhou'd from Death retrieve
The Nymph; in them ſhe ſhou'd for ever live.

PROLOGUE
TO
JULIUS CÆSAR.

Spoken at St. Paul's School, *Jan.* 27, 1712.

SHou'd *Shakeſpear*'s Ghoſt return again to Light,
And ſee us play his *Cæſar* here To-night,
How wou'd He ſmile to view our mimick Rage,
And little Heroes ſtrut along the Stage?
To ſee in Miniature his lofty Scenes
Acted by beardleſs Stateſmen in their Teens?

Yet

Yet our green Age may juſtly plead our Cauſe,
Procure our Pardon, if not gain Applauſe.
In Great and Worthy Things, th' Attempt alone
May claim ſome Portion of deſerv'd Renown.
The Thirſt of Fame, the very Love of Praiſe,
A Noble Generous Turn of Soul betrays:
'Tis this the panting Hero's Mind excites
To Tasks of Glory, and his Toil requites.
'Twas Love of Fame, that *Cæſar*'s Boſom fir'd
With active Valour, and his Breaſt inſpir'd
O'er the whole Globe t'extend the *Roman* Sway,
And make the diſtant Poles their Laws obey.

Impell'd by This, what dauntleſs Souls can dare,
Let matchleſs *Marlb'rough*'s mighty Deeds declare;
Great *Marlborough*! in whoſe accompliſh'd Mind
All *Cæſar*, but his Vices, we may find;
Who, in a juſter Cauſe, and not his Own,
Has *Cæſar*'s Conduct and his Courage ſhown.

Yet not to Thirſt of Fame alone we owe
Heroic Actions, but to Beauty too:

Oft

Oft' your Reſiſtleſs Charms, ye ſhining Fair,
In worthy Deeds may juſtly claim a Share;
Love oft' the noble Martial Flame inſpires,
And at *your* Eyes the Hero's Boſom fires,
Who for *your* Smiles does Honour's Paths purſue,
And conquers Nations, but to conquer you.

EPIGRAM.

DEliver'd in a dull and lifeleſs Strain,
The beſt Diſcourſes no Attention gain;
For if the Orator ſeems half aſleep,
He'll ſcarce his Auditors from Snoring keep.

To a LADY, *offering to tell the Author his Fortune.*

CLOE, You well my future Fate may ſhow,
Which, whether good or bad, from you
muſt flow.
With needleſs Care you ſearch the Stars and Skies;
No Stars can influence Me, but thoſe bright Eyes.

The

The Gods, that govern by Supreme Decree,
In their own Minds may all Events foreſee.

On Arithmetic and Geometry.

HAIL heav'nly Pair! by whoſe conſpiring Aid
The beauteous Fabrick of the World was [made!
Led on by You, audacious Men forget
The narrow Bounds by envious Nature ſet;
To yon' bright Manſions ſoar with happy Flight,
Survey the Starry Realms, and range thro' Worlds
of Light!

EPIGRAM.

Occaſion'd by reading an inſipid Satyr againſt Sir Richard Steele, *Intitled,* Inſtructions to a Painter. *Written* ex tempore, *in the Year,* 1713.

PAinter, one Figure more, at My Requeſt,
Let on the living Canvas be expreſt;

There

There let an Aſs a Satyr's Viſard wear,
Conſpicuous by uncommon Length of Ear,
Whilſt on the Ground a feeble Lion feels
The Coward Fury of his ſpurning Heels.

Written under an OAK.

HAIL, friendly Plant! beneath the Shade
By whoſe wide-ſpreading Branches made,
Extended on the Graſs along,
I meditate my careleſs Song,
Provok'd by Birds that tune their Lays,
And Winds that whiſper in thy Sprays.
When I ſurvey thy ſtately Head,
And aged Trunk with Moſs o'erſpread,
Diviner Thoughts enrich my Brain,
And lift me to a loftier Strain;
Thus * *Mona*'s Bards receiv'd of old
The Secrets they the People told,
Whilſt whiſp'ring Genii of the Air
Inſpir'd the Truths, they did declare.

* *The Iſle of* Angleſey, *frequented by the ancient* Druids.

Cou'd I compoſe a deathleſs Song,
Like Thee Majeſtic, Lofty, Strong;
To Thee my grateful Muſe ſhou'd raiſe
Some Trophy worthy of thy Praiſe;
With fadeleſs Leaves thy Head ſhou'd crown,
And make thee Equal in Renown,
To Royal † *Charles*'s Starry Tree,
That twinkles o'er the Southern Sea.
I'd tell how *Jove*'s Imperial Mind
Was pleas'd with thy Majeſtic Kind;
(Who from the Thunder's blaſting Stroke
Does ſtill exempt his favour'd Oak;)
And Oaken Wreaths the Brows did grace
Of Victors in the duſty Race:
But this my Verſe in vain wou'd ſtrive;
My Verſe, which cannot Thee ſurvive.

† *Dr.* Halley *has diſtinguiſh'd one of the Southern Conſtellations by the Name of the* Robur Carolinum, *or* Charles's Oak.

TO THE
EARL *of* ROSCOMMON;

Occaſion'd by his Eſſay on Tranſlated Verſe.
From the Latin *of Mr.* Charles Dryden.

THAT happy *Britain* boaſts her tuneful Race,
And Laurel Wreaths her peaceful Temples grace,
The Honour and the Praiſe is juſtly due,
To You alone, Illuſtrious Earl! to You.
For ſoon as *Horace* with his artful Page,
By Thee explain'd, had taught the liſt'ning Age;
Of brighteſt Bards aroſe a skilful Train,
Who ſweetly ſung in their Immortal Strain.
No more content great *Maro*'s Steps to trace,
New Paths we ſearch, and tread unbeaten Ways.
Ye *Britons* then triumphantly rejoice;
And with loud Peals and one conſenting Voice,
Applaud the Man, who does unrivall'd ſit,
The Sov'reign-Judge and Arbiter of Wit!

For, led by Thee, an endleſs Train ſhall riſe
Of Poets who ſhall climb Superior Skies;
Heroes and Gods in Worthy Verſe ſhall ſing,
And tune to *Homer*'s Lay the lofty String.

Thy Works too, *Sov'reign Bard! if right I ſee,
They ſhall tranſlate with Equal Majeſty;
While with new Joy, thy happy Shade ſhall rove
Thro' the bleſt Mazes of th' *Elyſian* Grove,
And wond'ring, in *Britannia*'s rougher Tongue
To find thy Heroes and thy Shepherds ſung,
Shall break forth in theſe Words: " Thy favour'd
Name,
" Great Heir and Guardian of the *Mantuan* Fame!
" How ſhall my willing Gratitude purſue
" With Praiſes large as to thy Worth are due?
" Tho' taſtleſs Bards, by Nature never taught,
" In wretched Rhymes diſguiſe my genuine
Thought;
" Tho' *Homer* now the Wars of Godlike Kings,
" In *Ovid*'s ſoft enervate Numbers ſings;
" Tune-

* *Virgil.*

" Tuneful *Silenus*, and the Matchleſs Verſe
" That does the Birth of Infant Worlds rehearſe,
" Atones for All: By that, my reſcu'd Fame
" Shall vie in Age with Nature's deathleſs Frame;
" By Thee the learned Song ſhall nobly live,
" And Praiſe from ev'ry *Britiſh* Tongue receive.

" Give to thy daring Genius then the Rein,
" And freely launch into a bolder Strain,
" Nor with theſe Words my happy Spirit grieve;
" * *The laſt good Office of thy Friend receive.*

" On the firm Baſe of thine Immortal Lays,
" A nobler Pile to thy lov'd *Maro* raiſe;
" My Glory by thy Skill ſhall brighter ſhine,
" With Native Charms and Energy Divine!
" *Britain* with juſt Applauſe the Work ſhall read,
" And crown with fadeleſs Bays thy Sacred Head.
" Nor ſhall thy Muſe the Graver's Pencil need,
" To draw the Heroe on his prancing Steed;

* Cape dona extrema tuorum; *The Motto to the Lord* Roſcommon's *Eſſay*.

" Thy living Verſe ſhall paint th' imbattled Hoaſt,
" In bolder Figures than his Art can boaſt.
" While the low Tribe of Vulgar Writers ſtrive,
" By mean falſe Arts to make their Verſions live,
" Forſake the Text, and blend each Sterling Line,
" With Comments foreign to my true Deſign;
" My latent Senſe thy happier Thought explores,
" And Injur'd *Maro* to himſelf reſtores.

OF THE

SEASONS *proper for* ANGLING.

THE Months, o'er which the nearer Sun diſplays
His warmer Influence and directer Rays,
Are moſt Propitious to the Angler's Toil,
And crown his Labours with the largeſt Spoil.

When Birds begin in brisker Notes to ſing,
And hail with chearful Notes returning Spring;

When

When Weſtern Winds in tepid Breezes fly,
And bruſh with downy Wing the brighten'd Sky;
When teeming Buds their verd'rous Iſſue yield,
And with their tender Offspring grace the Field;
Then let the Angler, with induſtrious Care,
His guileful Arms and Implements prepare,
Break Winter's Truce, and wage the watry War.

But, when Autumnal Blaſts have ſtrip'd the Wood,
And o'er the Ground its yellow Honours ſtrew'd;
When ſtormy *Boreas* reaſſumes his Reign,
And with malignant Breath deforms the Plain,
Let him a while his Snary Wiles forbear;
'Till, by the Courſe of the revolving Year,
The fairer Order of the Months returns,
And Nature with freſh Bloom her Face adorns.
Then, ſoon as Morn has chas'd the Shades of Night,
And ſtreak'd the purple Eaſt with roſie Light;
Soon as the Lark diſplays her early Wings,
And to the fragrant Air her Matins ſings,
The Angler, chearful with the Hopes of Prey,
Takes to the reeking Brook his dewy Way.

PSALM XCII. *Paraphras'd.*

GReat Sov'reign of the World, thy glorious Name
I ever will extol, and Praiſe proclaim.
Whether the *Morn* with riſing Light inveſt,
Or gloomy *Night* o'erſpread the darken'd Eaſt;
The ſmiling *Morn* thy bounteous Love ſhall hear,
And liſt'ning *Night* thy conſtant Truth revere:
The Lute and Harp ſhall join my willing Voice,
And the loud Cymbal add its tuneful Noiſe.
Whilſt in my Mind thy matchleſs Deeds I weigh,
And all thy Works in ſilent Thought ſurvey,
The pleaſing Theme my raviſh'd Boſom fires,
And ſacred Hymns ſpontaneouſly inſpires!
Thy Greatneſs who can tell! or who can trace
The Wiſdom of thy providential Ways!
Yet will audacious Man preſume to blame
Thy Conduct, and aſperſe thine awful Name.
Like ſome green Herb, which on the ſpringing Mead,
By Genial Show'rs refreſh'd, uprears its Head,

The

The Wicked ſeem awhile; but Vengeance due
Soon quells their Pride, and blaſts the guilty Crew.
But Thou art ſtill the ſame: Thou ne'er canſt know
The Changes that affect this World below.
Thine Enemies, O God! an Impious Band,
Shall periſh ſoon by thy deſtroying Hand.
Mean while the Righteous, like the goodly Height
Of the fair Palm, ſhall flouriſh to the Sight;
Or like a Cedar, that Majeſtic grows
On *Lebanon*, and wide extends its Boughs.
The Tree, that in thy Temple's Courts ſhall ſhoot
Deep in the hallow'd Ground its ſpreading Root,
Loaded with Fruits, with fadeleſs Bloſſoms gay,
Shall flouriſh ſtill, nor ever know Decay.
With ſuch abundant Favour Thou wilt bleſs
Thoſe who thy venerable Name confeſs;
That all the Nations ſhall be forc'd to own
Thy perfect Laws, and worſhip at thy Throne.

PSALM CXLVI. *Paraphras'd.*

I.

IN pious Hymns and conſecrated Lays,
Whilſt vital Streams my beating Veins ſhall [ſwell,
Great Author of the World! thy deathleſs Praiſe,
And glorious Deeds, my joyful Tongue ſhall tell.

II.

Let not thy Heart a fond Aſſurance place
In any Earthly Monarch's fav'ring Smile;
Nor from the Mortal Aid of Human Race
With Hopes of Laſting Bliſs thy Soul beguile.

III.

Soon to their Native Duſt return again
The Sons of Men, at Death's Impartial Call;
Then vaniſh into Air their Counſels vain,
And to the Ground their Empty Projects fall.

IV.

Thrice happy He, that on th' Eternal King
For Succour and Defence alone relies,
And Safe beneath the Shadow of his Wing
Serenely ſits, and threatning Ills defies.

Him

V.

Him all Things both in Heav'n and Earth obey,
Their Great Creator and Almighty Lord;
Sooner the Sun from his fixt Courſe may ſtray,
Than *Iſrael*'s God forget his Sacred Word.

VI.

The Lord Aſſerts the poor Man's rightful Cauſe,
And frees from tort'ring Bonds the Pris'ner's Feet,
Reſcues the Helpleſs from th' Oppreſſor's Jaws,
And ſatisfies the hungry Soul with Meat.

VII.

The Blind, in Mercy He reſtores to Sight,
New Health and Vigour on the Sick beſtows;
But in the Righteous is his Chief Delight;
On them his ever-ſtreaming Favour flows.

VIII.

He to the Stranger, Widow, Orphan, proves
A faithful Friend, a Husband, Father kind;
And far from each the Miſchiefs He removes,
And guileful Wrongs by Impious Men deſign'd.

Thy

IX.

Thy King, O *Sion!* ſhall for Ever reign;
No End ſhall his Eternal Empire know,
Long as their Place the Stars of Heav'n maintain,
And Rivers to the thirſty Ocean flow.

A Deſcription of a Summer-Night *in the* COUNTRY.

STretch'd on his homely Bed, the weary'd Hind
Now ſleeps ſecure; no Cares diſturb his Mind:
No Uſe of Down or Opiate Drugs he knows;
His wholeſom Labour gives a ſweet Repoſe.
The Beaſts and Birds are now retir'd to Reſt,
Thoſe to their graſſy Couch, Theſe to their Neſt.
The Winds too are aſleep, and ſcarcely move
Thro' the ſtill Horrour of the gloomy Grove.
Now pearly Dews refreſh the gelid Air,
And kindly Nature's vital Juice repair.
All's huſh'd; and univerſal Silence reigns,
Save where the mournful Nightingale complains,

Or

Or where the wakeful Dog affrighted howls
At the ſhrill Screeking of foreboding Owls.
Deckt with unrivall'd Beams, the ſilver Moon
Has wheel'd her rolling Orb to Night's pale Noon,
Temp'ring the Darkneſs with ſo bright a Ray,
As might almoſt compare with that of Day;
Whilſt thouſand leſſer Lights with Her combine,
And All in one united Splendour ſhine.
Nor Heav'n alone thoſe radiant Beauties knows;
Each Buſh with num'rous living Spangles glows,
Diffuſing all around a Luſtre far,
Such as might guide the wand'ring Traveller.
As if a Show'r of Stars from yonder Sky
Had fall'n, and Earth deſign'd with Heav'n to vie.

A Paraphraſe on PROV. VIII.
Beginning at Ver. 10.

WHate'er of Good or Excellent is found
Within the Compaſs of this ſpacious Round,

Compar'd

Compar'd with *Wiſdom*, no Regard can claim;
With Her compar'd, can ſcarce deſerve a Name.
Not half ſo Beauteous is the dawning Light;
Not half ſo Fair the Stars that gild the Night.
In vain the Gems of *Ophir*'s favour'd Coaſt
Their dazled Luſtre in her Preſence boaſt:
Gay Orient Pearls and Gold in vain diſplay
Their vanquiſh'd Glories in her brighter Day.
Before Her, brilliant Di'monds dimly ſhine,
And bluſhing Rubies own her Worth divine.
Richer and Happier He, whoſe hallow'd Breaſt
Of *Wiſdom*'s ſacred Treaſures is poſſeſs'd,
Than if he Monarch reign'd, of all the wealthy Eaſt.
The Juſt, by *Wiſdom*'s righteous Precepts led,
The peaceful Paths of Life ſecurely tread,
The dang'rous Rocks of Vice with Safety ſhun,
And Virtue's pleaſant Courſe ſerenely run.

Artiſts by Her their ſubtle Works deviſe:
'Tis She, with Counſel Sage inſtructs the Wiſe:
'Tis She, who teaches Princes to command
By wholeſome Laws, and guides the Scepter'd Hand.

Before th' Eternal Mind, who dwells on high,
Hung up the ſpangled Curtains of the Sky,
With wond'rous Skill Earth's firm Foundations laid,
Or ſcoop'd the watry Deep's capacious Bed;
Before their tow'ring Heads the Mountains rear'd,
Or ſhady Woods and open Lawns appear'd;
Ere bubling Springs and Fountains had begun
Thro' painted Meads in Chryſtal Streams to run;
Ere chearful Verdure cloath'd the Naked Field,
Or flow'ry Vales did blooming Odors yield,
Wiſdom with uncreated Splendor ſhone,
And ſpread her Beams around th' Almighty's Throne,
Joyous, before the Sov'reign Preſence play'd,
Who with Delight Immenſe her heav'nly Form ſurvey'd!

And when this Univerſe with perfect Art
He rais'd, and caſt in Order ev'ry Part;
The Spheres, that roll their ſteady Courſe above,
Prepar'd, and taught the Planets where to move;
When Laws He to the ſwelling Ocean gave,
And bound in Ropes of Sand the raging Wave;

To

To wand'ring Clouds their airy Flight aſſign'd,
And, whence to blow, inform'd the ſweepy Wind,
Wiſdom Supreme did o'er the Whole preſide,
And in his awful Work the ſacred Founder guide.

TO

Sir *Richard Blackmore*,

ON HIS

Poem, entitled, *CREATION.*

Hic *canit errantem Lunam Soliſque labores,*
Unde hominum genus, & pecudes, unde imber, & ignes,
Arcturum, pluviaſque Hyadas, geminoſque Triones:
Quid tantum Oceano properent ſe tingere Soles
Hyberni, vel quæ tardis Mora Noctibus obſtet. Virg.

DRreſs'd in the Charms of Wit and Fancy, long
The Muſe has pleas'd us with her *Syren* Song;
But

But weak of Reaſon, and deprav'd of Mind,
Too oft on vile, ignoble Themes we find
The wanton Muſe her Sacred Art debaſe,
Forgetful of her Birth and heav'nly Race;
Too oft her flatt'ring Songs to Sin entice,
And in falſe Colours deck deluſive Vice;
Too oft She condeſcends, in Servile Lays,
The undeſerving Rich and Great to praiſe.
Theſe beaten Paths thy Loftier Strains refuſe
With juſt Diſdain, and Nobler Subjects chuſe:
Fir'd with Sublimer Thoughts, thy daring Soul
Wings her aſpiring Flight from Pole to Pole,
Obſerves the Footſteps of a Pow'r Divine,
Which in each Part of Nature's Syſtem ſhine,
Surveys the Wonders of this Beauteous Frame,
And ſings the Sacred Source, whence all Things
came.

But O! what Numbers ſhall I find, to tell
The mighty Tranſports which my Boſom ſwell,
Whilſt, guided by thy tuneful Voice, I ſtray
Thro' Radiant Worlds, and Fields of Native Day,

Wafted from Orb to Orb, unweary'd fly
Thro' the blue Regions of the yielding Sky,
See how the Spheres in Stated Courſes roll,
And view the juſt Compoſure of the Whole!

Such were the Strains by ancient *Orpheus* ſung,
To ſuch, *Muſæus'* heav'nly Lyre was ſtrung:
Exalted Truths in Learned Verſe they told,
And Nature's deepeſt Secrets did unfold.
How at th' Eternal Mind's Omnific Call,
Yon' Starry Arch, and this Terreſtrial Ball,
The briny Wave, the blazing Source of Light,
And the wan Empreſs of the ſilent Night,
Each in its Order roſe, and took its Place,
And fill'd with recent Forms the vacant Space;
How rolling Planets trace their deſtin'd Way,
Nor in the Waſtes of pathleſs *Æther* ſtray;
How the Pale Moon with Silver Beams adorns
Her changeful Orb, and gilds her ſharpen'd Horns;
How the Vaſt Ocean's ſwelling Tides obey
Her diſtant Reign, and own her watry Sway;
How erring Floods their circling Courſe maintain,
Supply'd by conſtant Succours from the Main;

Whilſt to the Sea the refluent Streams reſtore
The Liquid Treaſures, which She lent before;
What dreadful Veil obſcures the Solar Light,
And *Phœbe*'s darken'd Face conceals from mortal
Sight.

Thy Learned Muſe I with like Pleaſure hear
The Wonders of the Leſſer World declare,
Point out the various Marks of Skill Divine,
Which thro' its complicated Structure ſhine,
In tuneful Verſe the Vital Current trace
Thro' all the Windings of its mazy Race,
And tell how the rich purple Tide beſtows
Vigour and kindly Warmth, where-e'er it flows;
By what Contrivance of Mechanic Art
The Muſcles Motion to the Limbs impart;
How, at th' Imperial Mind's impulſive Nod,
Th' obedient Spirits thro' the Nervous Road
Find to their Fibrous Cells their ready way,
And the high Dictates of the Will obey;
From how Exact and Delicate a Frame
The channell'd Bones their nimble Action claim;

With how much Depth and Subtilty of Thought
The curious Organ of the Eye is wrought;
How from the Brain their Root the Nerves derive,
And Senſe to ev'ry diſtant Member give.

Th' extenſive Knowledge You of Man enjoy,
You to a double Uſe of Man employ;
Nor to the Body is your Skill confin'd,
Of Error's worſe Diſeaſe You heal the Mind.
No longer ſhall the hardy Atheiſt praiſe
Lucretius' piercing Wit and Philoſophic Lays;
But, by Your Lines convinc'd and charm'd at once,
His impious Tenets ſhall at length renounce,
At length to Truth and Eloquence ſhall yield,
Confeſs himſelf ſubdu'd, and wiſely quit the Field.

The

The FIFTH ODE *of the* FOURTH BOOK *of* HORACE:

Imitated, and Humbly Inſcrib'd

To the KING.

Printed in the Year 1714.

Aſpice venturo lætentur ut omnia Sæclo. Virgil.

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*TOO long, Illuſtrious *PRINCE*, does *Britain* moan
Her abſent Monarch and her Widow'd Throne;
From our expecting Shores no longer ſtay,
But to thy People come with promis'd Speed away.
† On *Albion* riſe with thine auſpicious Light,
And with Thy Preſence bleſs our longing Sight:

* Divis orte bonis, optime Romulæ
Cuſtos gentis, abes jam nimium diu:
Maturum reditum pollicitus Patrum
Sancto Concilio, redi.
† Lucem redde tuæ, Dux bone, patriæ:
Inſtar veris enim vultus ubi tuus
Affulſit populo, gratior it dies,
Et Soles melius nitent.

Thy Preſence, like the ſweet Approach of Spring,
New Life and Joy will to thy Subjects bring.
When Thou art here the jocund Hours will run
On ſmoother Feet, and brighter ſhine the Sun.
With ſuch Impatience, and ſuch ſtrong Deſires,
Britain her Royal *Hanover* requires,
* As the fond Mother on the winding Shores
Th' Arrival of her Darling Son explores,
Whom adverſe Winds, in ſome far diſtant Clime,
Detain from her Embrace beyond th' appointed [Time.
Protected by Thy Tutelary Care,
Virtue and Plenty ſhall their Heads uprear:
Each uſeful Art beneath Thy Guardian Hand
Shall flouriſh, and adorn our happy Land.
† The chearful Swain ſhall till his fertile Farm,
And tend his Flocks, ſecure from Martial Harm.

The

* Ut Mater juvenem, quem Notus invido
Flatu Carpathii trans maris æquora
Cunctantem ſpatio longiùs annuo
Dulci diſtinet à Domo,
Votis ominibuſque & precibus vocat;
Curvo nec faciem littore demovet:
Sic, deſideriis icta fidelibus,
Quærit patria Cæſarem.

† Tutus bos etenim rura perambulat:
Nutrit rura Ceres, almaque Fauſtitas:

* The Merchant o'er the peaceful Seas ſhall roam,
And bring the Wealth of diſtant *India* home.
† Returning *Faith* and *Truth* again ſhall ſmile,
(Virtues late baniſh'd from our wretched *Iſle*,)
Whilſt *Civil Diſcord*, *Strife* and *Party-Hate*,
No longer ſhall diſtract the jarring State;
But, urg'd by Thee, ſhall wing their haſty Flight,
And ſeek the Shelter of their Native Night.
‡ *GEORGE* on the Throne Eſtabliſh'd, who will [fear
Th' *Iberian* Sword, or dread the *Gallic* Spear?
Th' *Iberian*, and the ſuppliant *Gaul* unite
To court his Friendſhip, and confeſs his Right.
|| Where fragrant Jes'min, or the ſpreading Vine,
Their tender Boughs in verdant Arches twine;
Each faithful *Briton* ſhall ſecurely ſit, [repeat,
And *GEORGE*'s Praiſe with grateful Tongue

* Pacatum volitant per mare navitæ:
† Culpari metuit Fides.——
‡ Quis Parthum paveat? Quis gelidum Scythen,—
——Incolumi Cæſare? Quis feræ
Bellum curet Iberiæ?
|| Condit quiſque diem collibus in ſuis,——
Te multa prece, te proſequitur mero
Defuſo pateris; & Laribus tuum
Miſcet nomen——

Whilſt Bowls of flowing Wine move nimbly round,
With fervent Vows for *GEORGE*'s Welfare crown'd.
Each o'er the chearful Glaſs his Name ſhall blend
With his Lov'd Miſtreſs, or his Boſom Friend,
Whilſt thus he prays, * " Long, Long, may *Britain* know
" The Bleſſings which from *GEORGE*'s Sceptre flow:
" Her vain Attempts may buſie *Faction* ceaſe,
" Nor offer to moleſt our Sov'reign's Sacred Peace.

* Longas ô utinam, Dux bone, Ferias
Præſtes Heſperiæ, dicimus, &c.

On the Prodigies, which attended our Bleſſed Saviour's *Crucifixion.*

Aſpice convexo nutantem pondere mundum,
Terraſque, tractuſque maris, cœlumque profundum. Virg.

SEE! how the Globe heaves with convulſive Throes,
Whilſt gaping Sepulchres their Wombs diſcloſe.

From

From their ſound Sleep the Riſing Dead awake,
And the dark Manſions of the Grave forſake;
Gaz'd at, in Publick Streets they walk along,
And mix promiſcuous with th' aſtoniſh'd Throng.

Well may'ſt Thou quake, O Earth! and Agonize,
And with thy Dying Maker Sympathize;
For Never, ſince his firſt Omnific Call
Produce'd from Nothing thy Capacious Ball;
Since Rolling Time began his Infant Age,
So dire a Scene was acted on thy Stage!
Well may'ſt Thou tremble, and thy Ruin fear,
When Him, whoſe Pow'r upholds thy pond'rous Sphere,
(Horrid, Amazing View!) Thou ſee'ſt expire,
Beneath the Weightier Load of his Great Father's [Ire!

The ſickly Sun, grown Dim with pale Affright,
Refuſes to diſpenſe his wonted Light,
And threatens to the World an Everlaſting Night!
No Beam of Glory now his Head adorns,
In ſable Shades his Maker's Death he mourns;

To

To ſuch a Deed, he dares not lend a Ray,
But turns, Aghaſt, his lucid Eye away.
This ſtrange Eclipſe, againſt Heav'n's ſacred Laws,
Aſtronomers admire, but little dream the Cauſe.

Nature in gloomy Weeds her ſelf arrays,
And Homage due, to her Great Author pays.
His Fall, ſhe fears, portends her Obſequies,
And ſhudders with Chill Horror, when he dies.
O Nature! Lay thy Cauſeleſs Fears aſide;
To Save, and not Deſtroy the World, He di'd!

And when the Hour, prefix'd by Fate, ſhall come,
At which Thou muſt receive thy Final Doom;
When waſteful Flames thy Maſſy Spheres ſhall burn,
And to rude *Chaos* All again return;
As Chymiſts purge by Fire the Bullion Oar,
He'll raiſe thy ruin'd Frame, more Beauteous than before.

An EJACULATION.

O God! What Eloquence of Mortal Sound
Can paint the Glories, that in Thee are found?
Who can in Worthy Strains proclaim Thy Praiſe,
Or ſing of Thee in Undegrading Lays?
Whilſt I behold the Splendors of thy Face,
And the Perfections of thy Nature trace,
Fir'd with Delight, my panting Boſom glows,
My bounding Blood with briſker Motion flows,
Diſſolv'd in Raptures of Immortal Love,
I ſeem to antedate the Joys above!

To Mr. *Jabez Hughes*,

On his Tranſlation of *Claudian*'s Rape of *Proſerpine*, and the Epiſode of *Sextus* and *Erictho* from *Lucan*'s *Pharſalia*.

Written in the Year 1714.

LONG did the finiſh'd Works of *Rome* and *Greece*
The Learned with their hidden Treaſure pleaſe,

Ere any Writer, of a later Date,
The Matchleſs Pieces ventur'd to Tranſlate.
The drudging Pedants, that at firſt aroſe,
Conſtru'd the Ancients into chiming Proſe;
Guiltleſs of Genius and Poetick Heat,
Founder'd in Verſe and crept with hobbling Feet;
A faint Reſemblance heavily deſign'd,
But all the Life and Beauty left behind.

He, that an Author can interpret well,
Muſt in his Breaſt th' infectious Rapture feel;
His Fancy warm'd with the ſame heav'nly Fire,
That did his great Original inſpire.

Theſe needful Talents were in *Dryden* found,
Dryden! with ever-living Laurels crown'd;
In his Tranſlation, like Himſelf appears
The *Mantuan* Bard, unhurt by rowling Years;
Still in their native Charms his Numbers ſhine,
Harmonious ſtill, Majeſtick and Divine!
When *Dryden*'s Strains employ our raviſh'd Ear,
We ſeem the Language of the Gods to hear!

Such

Such Muſick warbles in his tuneful Song,
So ſweet his Verſe, ſo delicate and ſtrong!

With rival Art, my Much-lov'd Friend, You tread
In the bright Footſteps of th' Illuſtrious Dead.
If *Claudian* in the *Britiſh* Tongue had wrote,
He cou'd not better have expreſs'd his Thought,
Nor in more happy Diction have diſplay'd
Th' Infernal Rape of the Celeſtial Maid.
Thus finely told, the well-wrought Fable charms
Each liſt'ning Ear, and ev'ry Fancy warms.
A thouſand Beauteous Images ariſe,
And fill the Soul with ever-new Surprize.

Now rais'd aloft to *Ætna*'s flaming Crown,
We look on the contiguous Valleys down;
The pleaſing Scene a lovely Proſpect yields
Of blooming Meadows and enamell'd Fields.
Here *Proſerpine*, amid the Nymphly Train,
Moves with ſuperior Grace upon the Plain;
Thoughtleſs of *Venus* and her crafty Wiles,
Gaily She trips along, and Innocentlv ſmiles.

Now

Now to the Regions of the ſilent Dead,
And grizly *Pluto*'s darkſom Realms convey'd,
Aſtoniſh'd we ſurvey the dreary Coaſts
Of empty Shadows and of gliding Ghoſts;
Where *Phlegethon* his fi'ry Torrent rowls,
And with a tripple Yell fierce *Cerb'rus* howls.

Erictho's helliſh Charms and Magick Skill
Our Fancies next with trembling Horror fill.
The juſt Deſcription of a Form ſo foul
Startles our Thoughts, and ſhocks our inmoſt Soul.
Amaz'd we liſten, while the Poet tells
The mighty Force of Herbs and mutter'd Spells;
How from her Orb they make the Moon deſcend,
And in Mid-Heav'n th' enchanted Sun ſuſpend;
Cauſe ſudden Storms and Whirlwinds to ariſe,
And bid the Thunder roar, along the cloudleſs Skies.

We Here behold, how well the *Britiſh* Tongue
Suits with the lofty Style of *Epick* Song.
Perhaps no living Language can be found,
Where ſo much Force and Harmony abound.

In

In vain the *French* their feeble Voice wou'd raiſe
To Nervous Numbers and Majeſtick Lays:
From *France* we have a double Laurel won,
By Us in Writing, as in Arms outdone:
From *Britain*'s Iſle the greateſt Heroes ſpring;
Heroick Acts the *Britons* beſt can ſing:
None but an *Addiſon*'s Immortal Strain
Can worthily record a *Marlborough*'s *Campaign*.

A

VERNAL HYMN,

In PRAISE of the

CREATOR.

ARiſe, my Muſe: Awake thy Sleeping Lyre,
And fan with tuneful Airs thy languid Fire.
On daring Pinions rais'd, low Themes deſpiſe;
But ſtretch thy Wings in yon' bright azure Skies.
Let not this chearful Prime, theſe Genial Days,
In Silence paſs, ſo friendly to thy Lays.

Hark!

Hark! how the Birds, on ev'ry blooming Spray,
With ſpritely Notes accuſe thy dull Delay:
See how the Spring, adorn'd with gaudy Pride
And youthful Beauty, ſmiles on ev'ry Side!
Here painted Flow'rs in gay Confuſion grow;
There chryſtal Streams in wild *Meanders* flow:
The ſprouting Trees their leafy Honours wear,
And *Zephyrs* whiſper thro' the balmy Air.
All things to Verſe invite. But, O! my Muſe,
What lofty Theme, what Subject wilt thou chuſe?
The Praiſe of Wine let Vulgar Bards indite,
And Love's ſoft Joys in wanton Strains recite;
With Nobler Thoughts do Thou my Soul inſpire,
And with Diviner Warmth my Boſom fire.

Thee, *BEST* and *GREATEST!* let my grateful Lays,
Parent of Univerſal Nature, praiſe!
All things are full of Thee! Where-e'er mine Eye
Is turn'd, I ſtill thy preſent Godhead ſpy!
Each Herb the Footſteps of thy Wiſdom bears,
And ev'ry Blade of Graſs thy Pow'r declares!
As yon' clear Lake the pendent Image ſhows
Of ev'ry Flow'r that on its Border grows;

So, in the fair Creation's Glaſs, we find
A faint Reflection of th' Eternal Mind.

Whate'er of Goodneſs and of Excellence
In Nature's various Scene accoſt the Senſe,
To Thee alone their whole Perfection owe,
From Thee, as from their proper Fountain, flow.

Fair are the Stars, that grace the ſable Night,
And Beauteous is the Dawn of Roſie Light;
Lovely the Proſpect, that each flow'ry Field,
Theſe limpid Streams and ſhady Foreſts yield:
To Thee compar'd, nor Fair the Stars of Night,
Nor Beauteous is the Dawn of Roſie Light;
Nor Lovely is the Scene, each flow'ry Field,
The limpid Streams and ſhady Foreſts yield.

Incapable of Bounds, above all Height,
Thou art inviſible to Mortal Sight;
Thy-ſelf thy Palace! And, ſuſtain'd by Thee,
All live and move in thy Immenſity.

Thy Voice Omnipotent did Infant-Day
Thro' the dark Realms of empty Space diſplay,
This glorious Arch of heav'nly *Sapphire* rear,
And ſpread this Canopy of liquid Air.

At Thy Command, the Starry Hoſt, the Sun,
And Moon, unerringly their Courſes run;
Ceaſeleſs they move, Obſequious to fullfil
The Task aſſign'd by Thy Almighty Will.
Thy Vital Pow'r, diffus'd from Pole to Pole,
Inſpires and animates this ample Whole.

If Thou wert Abſent, the Material Maſs
Wou'd without Motion lie in boundleſs Space.
The Sun, arreſted in his Spiral Way,
No longer wou'd diſpenſe alternate Day;
A breathleſs Calm wou'd huſh the ſtormy Wind,
And a new Froſt the flowing Rivers bind.

Whate'er, thro' falſe Philoſophy, is thought
To be by *Chance* or *Parent-Nature* wrought,

From

From Thee alone proceeds. With timely Rain
Thou ſate'ſt the thirſty Field and ſpringing Grain.
Inſpir'd by Thee, the *Northern* Tempeſts ſweep
The bending Corn, and toſs the foamy Deep:
Inſpir'd by Thee, the ſofter *Southern* Breeze
Wafts fragrant Odours thro' the trembling Trees.
By Thee conducted thro' the darkſom Caves
And Veins of hollow Earth, the briny Waves
In bubling Springs and fruitful Fountains riſe,
And ſpout their ſweeten'd Streams againſt the Skies.

By Thee, the Brutal Kind are taught to chuſe
Their proper Good, and Noxious things refuſe;
Hence each conforms his Actions to his Place,
Knows to preſerve his Life, and propagate his Race.
Hence the wiſe Conduct of the painful Bee;
Who future Want does conſtantly foreſee,
Contrive her waxen Cells with curious Skill,
And with rich Stores of gather'd Honey fill.
Hence the gay Birds, that ſport in fluid Air,
Soft Neſts, to lodge their callow Young, prepare,

Rear with unweari'd Toil the tender Brood,
From Harms protect, and furniſh 'em with Food.

But Man, whom thy peculiar Grace deſign'd
The Image of thine own Eternal Mind,
Man thy chief Favourite, Thou did'ſt inſpire
With a bright Spark of thy Celeſtial Fire.
Rich with a Thinking Soul, with piercing Eye
He views the ſpacious Earth and diſtant Sky;
And ſees the various Marks of Skill Divine,
That in each Part of Nature's Syſtem ſhine.
Him therefore it becomes, in grateful Lays,
To ſing his bounteous Maker's ſolemn Praiſe.

ESSAYS

ESSAYS

ON

Several SUBJECTS.

ESSAYS

ON

Several SUBJECTS.

ON THE EXCELLENCY OF *Divine Contemplation.*

THE Mind of Man is naturally delighted with the Contemplation of whatever is Beautiful and Excellent; and the greater and more ſublime thoſe Perfections are, wherewith any Object is endued, the more exalted and refined is the Pleaſure, which the Soul conceives from the Contemplation of it. Now GOD is a Being of Infinite Perfection and Excellence, in whom all the Rays of Goodneſs and Beauty which are ſcattered and diſperſed among

the Creatures, concenter and are united. It cannot therefore be imagin'd, but that the Contemplation of ſo lovely and excellent an Object muſt be highly grateful and pleaſing to the Soul. That Infinity of the Divine Attributes and Perfections, which by puzzling and embarraſſing the Underſtanding, might be thought to leſſen this Pleaſure, does really increaſe it. For the Mind is naturally pleaſed with the Speculation of what is Infinite, and loves to loſe it ſelf, as it were, in an unſtahomable Depth.

The Grandeur and Magnificence of an Infinite Object affect it with an ineffable Complacency; Somewhat like that we take in beholding the vaſt Expanſe of the Firmament, or the ſpacious Surface of the Ocean. Thus we find that thoſe Theorems in Geometry, which have a relation to Infinite, afford the greateſt Delight and Satisfaction to curious Minds: Such, for Example, as that of *Torricellius*, that a Solid of Infinite Length, may be equal to a Finite Quantity: Or thoſe wonder-

wonderful Theorems about the Proportions of Infinite Quantities, which Dr. *Halley* has publiſh'd in the *Philoſophical Tranſactions*. But now, as the moſt Excellent Creatures with all their Attributes and Perfections are but Finite, ſo 'tis impoſſible that the Mind ſhould find this ſort of Pleaſure in the Contemplation of them. 'Tis only in the All-glorious Eſſence of the Creator, that it can entertain it ſelf with theſe unbounded Proſpects, and be raviſh'd with the Speculation of theſe Infinite Grandeurs.

But farther; As the Contemplation of the Divine Attributes in themſelves, cannot but be very grateful and entertaining; ſo That Delight muſt needs be exceedingly encreas'd, when we conſider them with the Relation they bear to us, and how they all, as it were, conſpire to render Us happy, as well as that Adorable Being to whoſe Eſſence they belong. The Goodneſs of God makes all his Attributes in ſome Senſe our own; in as much as it moves him to communicate

nicate ſuch a Share of them to Us, as the Narrowneſs of our created Capacities can receive, and engages him to employ them all for our Advantage.

What Joy muſt it give a Man, to conſider that he is the Creature of a Being of infinite Wiſdom, Power, Goodneſs, and all other Perfections; who made him with no other View, than that he might make him happy in the Enjoyment of Himſelf; and will certainly one Day deliver him for Ever from all the Miſeries and Imperfections, under which he now labours, and admit him to a Participation of his own infinite Wiſdom and Happineſs!

What Wound of Affliction can be ſo deep, as that this Sovereign Balſam will not heal? What Weight of Sorrow ſo heavy, as this ſtrong Conſolation will not enable a Man to bear? What tho' at preſent we live in a State of Ignorance and Miſery, baniſh'd from our Native Country above, the Region of beatified Spirits, into this barren and uncomfortable World; when in a few Days we ſhall return

turn thither again; and live there in Bliſs and Security for Ever.

The Soul thirſts after an Infinite Good, nor can any thing Leſs fully ſatisfy its Deſires. Were there nothing for us to enjoy beyond what this World can afford, we might juſtly deplore the unhappy Frame of our Natures, which would ſubject us to a fatal Neceſſity of being miſerable, merely thro' the Diſproportion of our Deſires to our Enjoyments. Our own unſatisfy'd Longings after farther Good would become our Torment; and To be Immortal, would be To be condemn'd to pine away Eternity in the Anguiſh of a Hopeleſs, yet Fervent and Unextinguiſh'd Love. 'Tis GOD only, who can give perfect Repoſe and Contentment to the Soul; who can fill all its Capacities, and ſatisfy all its moſt enlarged Deſires! In Him is an immenſe Ocean of Good! an infinite Treaſure of Beauty and Perfection! a never-failing Spring of Bliſs, which the Soul will never be able to exhauſt throughout all the Ages of Eternity! Since therefore

therefore the Soul is conſcious to her ſelf, that ſhe deſires an Infinite Good, and that ſhe cannot be happy but in the Fruition of it; how is it poſſible that ſhe ſhould duly contemplate the glorious Attributes and Perfections of the Deity, without feeling her ſelf tranſported with the moſt raviſhing Joy! In Him ſhe finds ſomething really exiſting, ſufficient to ſatisfy all her moſt craving Appetites, and commenſurate to her largeſt Wiſhes; and is pleaſingly convinced, that That unquenchable Thirſt which ſhe feels in her ſelf after Good, was not given her to make her Miſerable, but to render her capable of the Sublimeſt Happineſs. She looks upon God as her natural Portion and Inheritance; and upon every Perfection and Excellence ſhe diſcovers in him, as a Treaſure, in the Poſſeſſion and Enjoyment of which, by Contemplation and Love, ſhe ſhall one Day become Happy.

But, beſides the Delight and Conſolation, which the Mind receives from a due Contem-

Contemplation of GOD, and the Divine Attributes, there is ſtill a farther Advantage to be reap'd from this Angelical Exerciſe; and That is the moralizing our Souls, and regulating our Wills and Affections. Nothing has a more direct Tendency to this, than Divine Contemplation. This refines and elevates our Affections; and inſpires us with a certain Dignity of Mind and Virtuous Pride, which makes us deſpiſe the low Pleaſures of Senſe, and raiſes us above this tranſitory Scene of things. This teaches us, that thoſe Divine Faculties of our Souls, Reaſon and Underſtanding, were not given us merely to purvey for the Pleaſures and Neceſſities of the Body, and to contrive the Means of ſupporting for a while a wretched periſhing Being; but to render us capable of contemplating and enjoying Him, whom to know is Eternal Life!

'Tis the Opinion of many Divines, that the clear Viſion of God, which beatified Souls ſhall enjoy, will have

have ſo powerful an Influence upon them, as to conſtrain them, by a certain happy Neceſſity, to Goodneſs. If this be true, we ought in Reaſon to conclude, that an aſſiduous Contemplation of God muſt have a proportionable Effect upon the Soul, and at leaſt very ſtrongly incline, tho' not abſolutely neceſſitate it, to be Virtuous. And indeed, it cannot well be otherwiſe; for, as he that keeps continually in View both his Duty it ſelf, and the Reaſons and Motives of it, can ſcarcely do otherwiſe than perform it; ſo it is impoſſible that a Man ſhould attentively contemplate the Divine Nature and Attributes, and yet be ignorant either of his Duty, or the Motives to it. How ſhould He, who keeps up in his Mind a lively Senſe of his living and acting under the Eye, and in the continual Preſence of a juſt and powerful God, who will not ſuffer the Tranſgreſſors of his righteous Laws to go unpuniſh'd, nor let the Obſervers of them paſs unrewarded, find in his Heart to ſin againſt Him? 'Tis only becauſe we do not

not attend to these weighty Truths as we ought, that they have so little Influence on our Hearts and Lives. If we never reflect on these things, they will have no more Effect upon us, than if they were not at all; and the only way to make them of real Use to the purifying our Hearts, and reforming our Lives, is to fix and rivet them in our Minds, by frequent and serious Contemplation.

A

DEMONSTRATION

Of the BEING of

One Eternal GOD.

PROPOSITION I.

THERE is some Independent Being, or Being that exists of himself without any External Cause. The contrary

to

to this is a Contradiction. For if all things that exiſt are Cauſed, then all things muſt needs be Cauſed by Nothing; that is, Not be Cauſed.

II.

This Independent Being muſt be Abſolutely-neceſſary. For, Nothing can ceaſe to Be, but by the Sublation of That, on which it depends. The Denial of this, is a formal Contradiction. Therefore a Being which depends on Nothing, cannot poſſibly not Be, or is Abſolutely-neceſſary.

III.

It muſt imply a Contradiction, to ſuppoſe the Non-exiſtence of this Abſolutely-neceſſary Being. This is plain. For to ſuppoſe, That an Abſolutely-neceſſary Being is not; is to ſuppoſe, That a Being which cannot poſſibly not Be, is not.

IV.

There can be but One Abſolutely-neceſſary Being. For if there were two or more Abſolutely-neceſſary Beings, it would be no Contradiction, to ſuppoſe

Either of them to exiſt without the other: Becauſe, by that Suppoſition, they would have no Dependence upon one another; and conſequently Both of them might Succeſſively be ſuppoſed not to Be, without any Contradiction. The Contrary to which, was before ſhewn to be the Property of an Abſolutely-neceſſary Being.

V.

Since there can be but One Independent Neceſſary Being, it follows; That all Beings which exiſt, but One, are Cauſed and Dependent.

VI.

Therefore all other Beings muſt have been Cauſed, Originally, by the One Uncauſed and Independent Being.

VII.

Since it appears, by Mathematical Demonſtration, That no Particle of Matter, how ſmall ſoever, can poſſibly be One Simple Being, this Original Independent Being cannot be Matter.

VIII.

And ſince Matter, and many diſtinct Cogitative Beings do exiſt, it follows; That all Matter, and all Minds, but One, were Cauſed or Created by this One Independent Being; Which therefore (by that Metaphyſical Axiom, That the Cauſe muſt contain in it ſelf all the Reality or Entity, which is in its Effect,) muſt include in himſelf all the real Properties both of Mind and Matter, together with a Power of producing thoſe Beings; and conſequently be a moſt Wiſe and Powerful Being.

ON

ON THE

Continual Improvement

OF THE

Underſtandings of Beatified Spirits.

Occaſion'd by reading the Spectator, N° 111.

WHEN it is affirm'd, That the Underſtandings of the Bleſſed, in a future State, will be improving and enlarging themſelves for Ever, we are not to underſtand This, as if their natural Capacity or Power of Underſtanding would continually expand it ſelf, and grow more extenſive to all Eternity. For tho' the actual View of the Mind may be more or leſs clear, lively, and extenſive, as more or leſs of her natural Power of Perception is drawn out into Act, or lies dormant and unexerted; or as more or leſs of that Preception, which She actually has at any time, is diverted and drawn

off, from the Object She contemplates, by ſenſible Impreſſions; tho', I ſay, the actual Perception of the Mind is found by Experience capable of theſe Ebbs and Flows, theſe various Degrees of Intenſion and Remiſſion; yet, I think, it is not conceivable, that her natural Power or Capacity of Perception ſhou'd be either increaſed or diminiſhed. For every finite Intelligence muſt be capable of a certain limited degree of Perception, and no more; and conſequently when its Perception is raiſed to this Degree of Intenſeneſs, its Capacity is entirely filled. But in all Probability the whole Intellectual Power of a beatified Spirit will be drawn out into Act at once upon its firſt Entrance into Heaven; the Underſtandings of the Bleſſed will be perpetually exerciſed with the utmoſt Degree of Intenſeneſs, on the beatific Objects they ſhall have before 'em: They ſhall always be at their full Stretch, and conſequently incapable of being raiſed higher. For, as it is naturally impoſſible to improve the Original Eſſential Capacity

pacity of any Intelligent Being, ſo is it no leſs impoſſible to add any thing to the actual Perception of ſuch a Being, when that Perception is ſuppoſed fully commenſurate to its Original Capacity. The Mind, in theſe Reſpects, may be fitly compar'd to a Veſſel; and Thought or Perception to Liquor; for as it is not neceſſary that the whole Capacity of the Veſſel ſhou'd be fill'd with Liquor, or indeed that it ſhou'd have any in it, ſo neither does it ſeem neceſſary to the Mind, to have all her Power of Perception or Intellectual Capacity fill'd and employ'd by actual Thought, nor indeed any of it; which Experience ſeems to witneſs, inaſmuch as we often paſs whole Nights, without being Conſcious to our ſelves, of our having thought of any thing. But as, tho' the actual Content of the Veſſel may very well fall ſhort of its whole Capacity, yet it can never exceed it; So likewiſe, it is no leſs impoſſible for the actual Perception of the Mind, to exceed the Meaſure of its natural Capacity, (by which

it is neceſſarily bounded,) tho' it may very well fall ſhort of it. And from the Inequality of this Original Capacity, ariſes an Intrinſick Difference in the ſeveral Orders of Intelligent Beings, as to Intellectual Endowments. The Minds of ſome are naturally more capacious and enlarged than thoſe of others; that is, they are naturally capable of being raiſed to higher and more intenſe Degrees of Perception. And, after this manner, we may conceive Intelligences more and more Capacious, 'till we arrive at the Supreme Mind, whoſe Underſtanding is not only Infinitely-extenſive, (as comprehending all things in One View) but likewiſe Infinitely-intenſive, as perceiving every particular thing with the utmoſt Clearneſs and Penetration of Thought. But to return:

Tho' the Perfection of the Underſtanding of a beatified Spirit cannot be enlarged by a continual Addition of new Degrees of Perception, yet there remains another way, whereby it muſt be perpetually improved, and that is by the Encreaſe

creaſe of its habitual Knowledge. In order to demonſtrate This, there will be need of no more than theſe two reaſonable *Poſtulata*; *Firſt*, That the Memory of ſuch a Spirit will be very perfect, ſo as to afford him a compleat Repreſentation of all his former Thoughts and Views. *2dly*, That his Underſtanding will be perpetually exerciſed in new Enquiries and Speculations, and enrich'd and brighten'd by the Acquiſition of new Truths. For from theſe Premiſes it unavoidably follows, That the Underſtanding of ſuch a Spirit muſt continually improve; or that the Stock of his habitual Knowledge muſt daily increaſe. For where a perpetual Addition is ſuppoſed on one hand, without any Loſs or Subſtraction on the other, there muſt neceſſarily ariſe a continual Growth and Progreſs. And while the Memory, like a Faithful Treaſurer, preſerves that Revenue of Knowledge Undiminiſhed, to which the Induſtry of the Underſtanding is inceſſantly

making freſh Additions, the Mind muſt unavoidably be enrich'd.

As to the Premiſes, on which this Concluſion is founded; The firſt, I think, cannot be reaſonably queſtion'd; for, as it muſt be allow'd poſſible for the Memory to be raiſed to ſuch a Degree of Perfection, as to yield the Mind a compleat View of all her paſt Thoughts and Reaſonings, ſo we have Reaſon to believe, that all the Faculties of a beatified Spirit will be advanced in the higheſt Manner. We may well imagine the Memory of ſuch a Spirit capable of this Exaltation, ſince Hiſtory informs us of ſome, even among us frail Mortals, who have almoſt attain'd to that pitch of Perfection. Witneſs Monſieur *Paſchal*, who, we are told, 'till Sickneſs had impair'd his Memory, was endow'd with ſo prodigious an Excellence in that Faculty, that he never forgot any thing he had done, read, or heard in his Rational Age. Now as ſuch a Memory as this, will afford a Spirit a ſure Repoſitory for his actual Know-

Knowledge; ſo the Review and Conſideration of his former Diſcoveries and Reaſonings thus repreſented to him, will wonderfully aſſiſt and further him in the Purſuit and Attainment of new Knowledge. The Truths he already knows, will ſerve as ſtanding Rules and Principles, whereby to decide many other Queſtions, which may occur to his Thoughts. Some Principles have a ſurpriſing Fertility, and draw after them a numerous Train of Conſequential Truths. Such is the Connexion and Dependence of one Truth upon another, that the Diſcovery of one, never fails to open the way to the Diſcovery of many more. As he, that aſcends a Ladder, not only raiſes himſelf every Step he takes, but likewiſe gains thereby the means to advance ſtill higher; ſo the Mind, in its Intellectual Aſcent to Truth, proceeds, Step by Step, in a continu'd Gradation of Diſcoveries, till it arrives at length to ſuch Heights, as it thought at firſt Impoſſible to be attain'd; and ſuch as indeed

deed it cou'd never have reach'd but by ſuch a gradual Proceſs; for, in order to the Diſcovery of ſome Truths, there is neceſſarily required the previous Knowledge of a great many more. This is experienced in every Science, but in none ſo clearly and fully as in Geometry. This whole Science is but one continu'd Chain of Reaſoning, deduced with admirable Art and Sagacity from a few clear Axioms and Poſtulates. Here we often meet with Propoſitions, whoſe Demonſtration is ſo compounded, and depends upon ſuch a long Train of Conſequences, that to reſolve them into their firſt Principles, it wou'd be neceſſary to run thro' a multitude of Antecedent Propoſitions.

The ſecond Propoſition I aſſum'd, in order to demonſtrate the ſtill-growing Perfection of a beatified Intelligence, *viz.* That his Underſtanding ought to be conceived as inceſſantly exerciſed and employ'd in the Search and Diſcovery of new Truths, is no leſs reaſonable than the former. Revelation teaches us, that our future

future Happineſs will conſiſt in the Contemplation and Viſion of God, who includes in himſelf all Truth. Therefore the longer we ſhall have enjoy'd this Happineſs, that is, the longer we ſhall have contemplated the Divine Eſſence, and thoſe eternal Truths, which conſiſt in the Relations of the Divine Ideas, the more we muſt be advanced in the Knowledge of God, and thoſe Eternal Truths. So that the Underſtandings of the Bleſſed will continually improve in a twofold manner;

Firſt, In Reſpect of the Stock of their habitual Knowledge, which will be perpetually enlarged; like a Lake, which, tho' repleniſh'd by the Inceſſant Influx of many Streams, ſhould be ſuppoſed to have no Outlet.

And *Secondly*, In Reſpect of their Diſpoſition for the Acquirement of new Knowledge, which muſt likewiſe neceſſarily increaſe with their actual Knowledge. The Mind, in its Purſuit of Learning, may be compared to a Conqueror, who not only enlarges the Bounds of his Dominions

minions by every new Victory, but alſo receives thereby a freſh Acceſſion of Strength and Power, to enable him to proceed ſtill farther; or to a Bird, who, the higher ſhe ſoars, finds her Aſcent ſtill more and more eaſie.

But, tho' the Mind will thus continually enlarge its Views, and add to the Stock of its Knowledge, yet will it never want new Matter to employ its Thoughts and entertain its Meditations. The Ocean of Truth is Boundleſs, and can never be exhauſted. Nay, not only the whole Intellectual Syſtem, but even every particular Branch, or Science, is infinite. This is what the Maſters of every Science confeſs, who, after they have apply'd themſelves with the utmoſt Aſſiduity to the Study of it, and made the greateſt Proficiency, are forced at laſt to acknowledge, That what they know is Nothing, in compariſon with what remains to be known: And of this they are by ſo much the more convinced, as they

they apply themſelves to it with greater Diligence.

So that the Contemplation of Truth, in which the Minds of the Bleſſed will be eternally employ'd, will never be able to cloy or ſatiate thoſe happy Spirits; but the infinite Variety of their Entertainment, ſtill preſenting them with ſomething new, will at once maintain, and ſatisfy their Curioſity for ever. Nay, ſo far will the Mind be from finding any Satiety in Knowledge, that ſtill the more it knows, it will be the more deſirous, as well as able, to make a farther Progreſs. The more it ſhall have experienced the Delicious Sweetneſs of Truth, the more eagerly will it thirſt and long after it. What an exquiſite Pleaſure then muſt the beatified Spirits enjoy, from the clear Contemplation and open Viſion of the beautiful and infinitely-various Scenes of the intellectual World! Were Truth indeed limited and finite, how delightful ſoever the Contemplation of it might be, it could not ſuffice for an Eternal Entertainment;

tainment; Becauſe, on that Suppoſition, how great ſoever the Extent of it is, it muſt in time be exhauſted: And the Mind, after having conquer'd all its Theories, and poſſeſs'd it ſelf of all its Syſtems, would, like another *Alexander*, ſit down and lament for new Worlds of Truth to ſubdue, new Provinces of Science to vanquiſh. But ſince Truth is infinitely-various and diffuſed, as well as beautiful and charming, 'tis every way qualified to render thoſe happy, who enjoy it.

ON THE BEAUTY OF THE UNIVERSE.

THERE is nothing that affords a more ſenſible Proof both of the Exiſtence and Goodneſs of God, than the

the Beauty of the Univerſe, thoſe innumerable gay Appearances and delightful Spectacles, which are ſcatter'd thro' all the Scenes of the viſible Creation. Thunder, Lightning, Earthquakes and ſuch like aſtoniſhing Phænomena of Nature, may perhaps terrifie us into an Apprehenſion of a Superior Power; but This is a Proof which works upon us in the moſt ſweet and agreeable, tho' at the ſame time forcible and convincing Manner. This gives us the moſt lovely and amiable View of our Maker, and whilſt it perſuades our Underſtandings of his Being, engages our Affections to rejoice in, adore and love him.

The Superſtitious among the *Romans* imagin'd, that the Places in the Country, which were more than commonly pleaſant, ſuch as the Openings of Woods and the flowery Margins of Fountains, were haunted by certain Rural Deities. This Fancy of theirs has often given me Occaſion to reflect, at the Sight of ſuch Places, that tho' there are indeed no Marks to be ſeen

ſeen in them of the Preſence of their Chimerical Divinities, yet that an attentive and conſidering Mind may find there many Tokens and Signatures of the real Preſence and Operation of the true God.

The Beauty of the Univerſe plainly ſhews, that it is neither the Work of Fate nor Chance, but of a Powerful and Munificent Intelligence, who conſider'd, in the framing of it, not only what was needful for the Preſervation, but likewiſe the Ornament of Nature; and provided not only for the Neceſſity, but even for the innocent Delight and Entertainment of all his ſenſible Creatures. With how many Charms and Graces has he adorn'd every Part of the Univerſe? as if he deſign'd that Nature ſhou'd repreſent to us the Beauty and Lovelineſs, as well as the Wiſdom and Beneficence, of its Author.

The ample Arch of Heaven, which hangs over our Heads, is tinctur'd with a ſprightly Azure. In a clear Night it appears like a vaſt Roof of Saphir, ſtudded with

with innumerable glowing Spangles, or illumin'd with ten thouſand ſhining Lamps. The Sun is ſo glorious and ſplendid a Body, that he has attracted the Devotion, as well as the Admiration of many Nations. With what Variety of Colours do his Beams adorn the wandering Clouds? He dies ſome with Scarlet or Purple, and paints the Skirts of others with Silver or tinctures them with Gold. How many beautiful and entertaining Scenes do we behold in the Heavens? What wild and rude, yet pleaſing and agreeable Proſpects of craggy Rocks and ſteep Mountains, do they often preſent to our View? How beauteous as well as uſeful is that nightly Subſtitute of the Sun, the Moon, who chears us in his Abſence with her borrow'd Beams? In how many ſeveral Forms, in how many various Dreſſes of Light does ſhe appear to our Eyes? Sometimes ſhe ſhines over us in a perfect Silver Orb, or, approaching to the Horizon, extends her Bulk into a large bloody beamleſs Globe; at other times

(when newly return'd from her dark Retirement) ſhe appears horn'd, or, like a Sickle, edg'd only on one ſide with a narrow Border of Light.

From contemplating the Beauties of the Heavens, let us now deſcend to thoſe of the Earth. Here we have a new Scene of delightful Objects open'd to our View. Tho' that Paradiſe within, which conſiſted in a conſtant Joy and inward Tranquility of Mind, be now loſt, yet much of outward Paradiſe ſeems ſtill to remain. Witneſs, Ye ſhady Groves and flowery Meads! Ye verdant Lawns and chryſtal Streams! whoſe Beauties have ſo often charm'd the Hearts of your Beholders, and afforded a Theme for the Songs of the Poets. Who can behold the Spring, array'd in all her youthful Pride and Gaiety, adorn'd with blooming Bloſſoms, ſprouting Leaves, and an infinite Variety of Flowers, without Admiration and Delight?

As the Face of Heaven is tinctur'd with a gay Azure, ſo that of the Earth is ſpread

ſpread with Green, a Colour which of all others is the moſt apt to revive the Imagination, and excite Alacrity in the Soul. The Surface of the Earth is not all Plain and Flat, which wou'd have taken away all Variety of Proſpect, but agreeably diverſify'd with Hills and Mountains, Valleys and Plains;

- - - - - - - - - - *Sweet interchange*
Of Hill, and Valley, Rivers, Woods and Plains,
Now Land, now Sea, and Shores with Foreſt crown'd. Milton.

How various are the Species of Trees, all entertaining to the Sight, as well as ſerviceable to the Conveniency of Mankind? Among thoſe of larger Size and taller Stature, we may reckon the Oak, the Pine, the Elm and the Beach. Theſe pleaſe our Imagination by their ſtately Bulk and towering Height, as well as by the various uniform Figures and different Verdures of their Leaves. Among thoſe of the lower Claſs, we may take Notice of the Lime, the Citron, the Orange, the Bay and the Laurel. Theſe

are ſo remarkable for their Beauty and Pleaſantneſs, that we commonly plant them in our Court-yards and Gardens, as Ornaments to our Houſes. 'Twou'd be endleſs to deſcribe all the Beauties of the Vegetable World. There is not one of all the Race, but what has ſome Beauty to boaſt of; either the regular and ſymmetrical Figure of its Leaves, the Gaiety of its Colours, or ſome other Ornament.

What Rhetoric can deſcribe the Beauty, or Arithmetic the Variety, of the ſeveral Species of Flowers? In each Month of the Spring and Summer a new Sett appears. The Primroſe and Violet lead the Van of the blooming Train, and diſcloſe their Beauties at the firſt Opening of the Spring. Theſe are ſucceeded by the Tulip, Piony, Flower-de-Lis, and many others. Then appear the Roſe, the Lilly, the Pink, the Julyflower, *&c.* With what bright Colours has Nature painted many of theſe Flowers? What Regularity and Geometric Exactneſs has ſhe obſerv'd in the Figure and Situation of their Leaves? She has

has ſo curiouſly embelliſh'd the very Fruits of the Earth, that it ſeems plain ſhe deſign'd them, not only to pleaſe the Taſte and ſatisfy the Hunger, but even to gratify the Sight of Man and other Animals. With how lovely a Yellow has ſhe burniſh'd the Orange? With how beautiful a Bluſh ſhe has died the downy Cheek of the Peach? With what lively ſtrokes of natural Paint ſhe has adorn'd many Sorts of Pears and Apples? How fine a Blue has ſhe ſpread over the Grape and Plumb; and with how deep and full a Red has ſhe colour'd the Cherry?

If we examine the ſeveral Kinds of Animals, we ſhall find the Bodies of them adorn'd with equal, if not ſuperior Beauty, to what is found in Vegetables. To begin with Man, the Prince of Animals, and Lord of this lower World. As he is endued with a rational and immortal Mind, ſo the fair and majeſtic Structure of his Body, renders it a ſuitable Habitation for ſuch a Gueſt. As he is the moſt excellent of all Animals, he

is likewiſe the moſt ſtately and beautiful. This appears more eminently in the Female Sex. The Charms of theſe are the perpetual Theme of Poets and Lovers. They celebrate them as Divinely Fair, as adorn'd with Angelic Graces, and ſhining with Celeſtial Beauty. Tho' theſe Encomiums muſt be allow'd to be too Hyperbolical and Extravagant, yet the moſt rigid *Stoick*, if he will but uſe his Eyes, will be forced to acknowledge, that the Form of many Women is indeed very Lovely and Beautiful. A wonderful Symmetry and Proportion of Features, a fair Complexion, a ſparkling Eye, a pleaſing Gaiety and Sweetneſs of Aſpect, and a certain ineffable Grace and Comelineſs, reſulting from the Combination of all theſe, may be ſeen in many of that Sex.

The inferior Terreſtrial Animals are not without their proper Ornaments. Witneſs the Horſe, the Deer, the Dog, and many others. The gay Plumes and beautiful Forms of Birds are no leſs entertaining to the Eye, than the Harmony of

their Notes is to the Ear. Who does not admire the Beauty of the Peacock, the Dove, the Parrot, the Pheaſant, and innumerable others of the feather'd Kind? Some are all over Scarlet or Azure, Green or White: Others are adorn'd with a Mixture of ſeveral bright and gaudy Colours, diſpos'd in the moſt agreeable manner imaginable.

The Fiſh likewiſe of the Sea and Rivers partake of this univerſal Beauty, which Nature has ſcatter'd over all her Works, in the juſt Proportion and Symmetry of their Parts, and the ſilver Luſtre of their Scales. The Trout in the Spring has his Body ſprinkled with lively Spots of Purple; and the Dolphin is celebrated for his Beauty.

The very Inſects, tho' ſo much inferior to other Animals in Bulk, do not at all fall ſhort of them in reſpect of Form and Ornament. With how exact a Proportion and Harmony of Parts has Nature fram'd their little Bodies? What a ſhining Gloſs and Poliſh has ſhe caſt over their Limbs, and with what gay and lively Co-

lours has ſhe painted them? I might inſtance in the Butterfly, the Spaniſh-fly, the Adderſpear, and many others.

This is a faint and imperfect Sketch of the Beauty of the Univerſe. He that wou'd have a juſt and adequate Idea of it, muſt conſult the Original. The Beauties of Nature are too various and too exquiſite, to be painted to the Life by any Pencil, or deſcrib'd by any Eloquence. A thouſand ſecret Charms and inexpreſſible Graces will be wanting, in the moſt compleat and lively Repreſentation we can poſſibly give of her.

Now we may obſerve that Abundance of theſe things, which contribute to the Beauty and Ornament of the Univerſe, ſeem ſcarcely of any other Uſe. Of this ſort are many Herbs and Flowers, and precious Stones; of which we know no other Uſe, or Deſign in Nature, but to garniſh the World, and entertain the Senſes and refreſh the Imagination of Man and other Animals. And even in the things, that are of neceſſary Uſe for

for preſerving the Frame of Nature, or the ſeveral Species of Animals, we find Ornament and Conveniency join'd together. Thus, for Inſtance, the Fruits of the Earth afford us a pleaſant and wholeſom Nouriſhment, but this they would have done as well, tho' they had not been ſo curiouſly painted with Colours, as many of them are. And as to Animals themſelves: It was neceſſary indeed, for the Preſervation of their Lives, that they ſhou'd be furniſh'd with Limbs and Organs of Senſation; but it was by no means neceſſary to this End, that their Limbs ſhou'd be formed with all that exact Proportion and Symmetry, and adorned with ſuch a Variety of gay Colours, as we find in many of them. The Pheaſant might have procured his Food and propagated his Kind, without his gaudy Plumes; and the Peacock without his Starry Train.

Now can any Man think, that all this Beauty and Ornament, which appears in every part of Nature, and accoſts his Eye on which ſide ſoever he turns it, can have any

any other Author than a wiſe and good God? Would Fate or Chance, thoſe thoughtleſs and undeſigning Principles, have not only ſo plentifully provided what was neceſſary for the Preſervation of the Syſtem of the World, and the ſeveral Species of Plants and Animals contain'd in it, but have conſulted likewiſe for the Ornament of the one, and the Delight and Entertainment of the other? It muſt (if I may be allow'd ſo to ſpeak) be a very wiſe and munificent Chance, that, not content to make a plain habitable World, has obſerved all this Order and Decency in its Work, and garniſh'd it out with all theſe curious Embelliſhments and Decorations. Why ſhould the Colour of the Sky be a beautiful Azure, and that of the Graſs and Trees a lively Green, rather than a Brown, or Grey, or any other leſs pleaſing to the Sight, if a wiſe Providence had not the Diſpoſal of things? Or why ſhould the Eyes of Animals be both of an equal Size, and of the ſame Make and Colour, and placed at

an

an equal Diſtance on either ſide the Noſe? And the like Queſtions may be ask'd, in reſpect of all the Order and Harmony in Nature. It wou'd be a difficult Matter to convince a reaſonable Peaſant, that even a common Cottage, which only ſerves to ſhelter its Inhabitants from the Winds and Weather, was the mere Effect of Chance; But ſuch a one wou'd certainly think the Man diſtracted who ſhou'd ſeriouſly endeavour to perſuade him, that a fair and magnificent Palace, exactly regular and ſymmetrical in its Deſign, adorn'd with elegant Painting and Sculpture, and furniſh'd with every thing which Pleaſure and Ornament as well as Neceſſity and Uſe require, had no other Original than the lucky Concourſe of Atoms.

FAMI-

FAMILIAR LETTERS.

To Mr. *N.*

London, *July* 22, 1709.

SIR,

I Am glad to hear of your ſafe Arrival at *H.* and that you are ſo well contented with your preſent Situation. I do not indeed wonder, to find you expreſs ſo much Satisfaction in it. For to reſide at a pleaſant Country-Seat, at a time of the Year when Nature feaſts Mankind with all the Variety of her moſt delicious Productions; to enjoy agreeable Converſation; and to have free Acceſs to a good Library, are ſuch advantageous Circumſtances, that one wou'd think it almoſt impoſſible to be unhappy under them. I frankly confeſs, I ſhou'd be tempted to envy Your Happineſs,

Happineſs, if my Affection for You did not make me ſhare in all Your Satisfactions, and conſider Your Felicity as my own What Man, (who enjoys the Uſe of Reaſon and his Senſes,) wou'd not gladly exchange the hateful Din and Clamour of a noiſy Town, for the warbling Melody of tuneful Birds, and lulling Murmurs of the limpid Streams? Who wou'd not prefer the charming Odors of Roſes and Jeſſamin, before the unwholeſom Vapours of a populous City; and the pleaſant Proſpects of ſhady Groves and flowery Meads, and all the beauteous Scenes of Nature, to the narrow Spectacle of ſmutty Walls and dirty Pavement? What Compariſon, to any contemplative and philoſophical Mind, between the bliſsful Obſcurity, Leiſure and Serenity of a quiet Rural Retreat, and a buſy turbulent City-Life? The very Idea of the Country tranſports my Soul with a Mixture of agreeable Paſſions! How much more then wou'd the Enjoyment? I had always a natural Inclination for the Country, and Averſion

to

to the Town. 'Twas there, I firſt drew Vital Breath and beheld the Light! We are wont to have a peculiar Fondneſs for the Place of our Birth; and, like Trees, thrive and proſper beſt in our Native Soil; but, if tranſplanted, are apt to pine and languiſh. I am,

SIR,

Moſt Affectionately Yours,

H. NEEDLER.

The Author's Age 19.

To Mr. *D.*

London, *September* 30, 1709.

SIR,

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * The † Epigram You mention, ſeems to me as excellent a Patern of Poetry, in its Kind, as the Action, which it celebrates, is of Courage and

† *See the* Tatler, N° 72.

Magnanimity. Mr. *Bickerſtaff*'s elegant Verſion of it convinces me of the Falſeneſs of that Vulgar Maxim, That a Copy always falls ſhort of the Original. For the Tranſlation has not only deſcribed the Action in as full and lively a Manner as the Original, in the two firſt Lines, but has likewiſe very much improved the Turn, and heightened the Paſſion, in which the Poet makes *Arria* addreſs herſelf to her Conſort, in the two laſt Lines. The Original runs thus;

Si qua fides, vulnus, quod feci, non dolet, inquit:
Sed quod tu facies, hoc mihi, Pæte, dolet.

Whereas, in the Tranſlation, She even attributes her Death to the Wound which *Pætus* was to receive.

The Wound I gave my ſelf I do not grieve,
I die by that which Pætus *muſt receive.*

If You ſtay any conſiderable time in the Country, I hope You will ſupply the Loſs of your Perſonal, by an Epiſtolary Converſation: Tho', I muſt confeſs,

feſs, in ſuch a Correſpondence You will lie under the ſame Diſadvantage as thoſe *Americans*, who barter'd Gold and Jewels for worthleſs Traſh and Bawbles; Since my Returns will be in no wiſe anſwerable to Yours, except in the Sincerity, wherewith they teſtifie that I am,

SIR,

Your moſt Obliged

Humble Servant,

H. NEEDLER.

To Mr. *H.*

London, *September*, 1709.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * They who are united in true Friendſhip, by a certain reciprocal Communication, like the Soul and Body, mutually partake in all the Good and Evil that happens to each Individual. One cannot be affected with any Misfortune, but the Other preſently ſympathizes with him, and endeavours to mitigate his Grief by taking Part of it upon himſelf. I do not diſſemble in telling you, that this is my Caſe with reſpect to you; and conſequently, that in offering Conſolation to you, I eaſe the Anguiſh of my own Breaſt.

Do but conſider, my dear Friend, the many comfortable Arguments, which both Religion and Philoſophy ſuggeſt to you, on this Occaſion; and you will be forced to acknowledge, that (though the Paſſions may

may not be ſo readily ſtill'd,) You have more Reaſon, on many Accounts, to rejoice than lament.

You either grieve for your ſelf, or for your Mother; either upon the Conſideration of your having loſt ſo kind and dear a Relative, or elſe becauſe you imagine, that ſhe has ſuſtain'd ſome Evil by Death.

If the laſt be the Ground of your Grief, I appeal to your own Conſcience, if it be not altogether unreaſonable? For what Evil can we imagine Death to be to the Virtuous? And ſuch ſhe certainly was, in a very eminent degree.

If we conſult either Reaſon or Revelation, we ſhall find, that Death is ſo far from being a real Evil; that, on the contrary, 'tis the very End of all Evil, and the Beginning of, and Inlet into all true Good. This Life is ſo far from being a Good, that we ſhall quickly find, if we will but lay aſide a little the deluſive Proſpects of our flattering Hopes, that as Experience has taught us, that the paſt Hours

of our Lives contain'd a far greater Portion of Bitter than Sweet in their Compoſition; So Reaſon will tell us, that we ought not to expect any better from the future. Therefore if we look no farther than the Grave, we have no Reaſon to think Death an Evil; but, on the contrary, ſince it is a Privation of Evil, we ought rather to eſteem it a Good.

But if Death be good even to Senſe, that can look no farther than the Grave, how much more will it be ſo in the Eye of Faith, which can penetrate beyond the dark Shades of Mortality, and view the Glories of the other World? If Death be good, conſider'd ſimply as a Releaſe from Evil; how much more will it appear ſo, when conſider'd as an Inlet into the Poſſeſſion of the greateſt Good, that human Nature is capable of enjoying? I profeſs, I am ſo far from thinking the State of the Dead deplorable, that I always envy them; and when I hear of the Death of any Perſons, I almoſt wiſh my ſelf in their Place, and long to bear them Company in their happy

happy Eſcape out of theſe Regions of Darkneſs and Miſery.

Nothing is certainly more prepoſterous and fantaſtical than that univerſal Cuſtom, of rejoicing at the Birth of our Fellow-Mortals, and lamenting their Deaths; which, if we wou'd act according to Reaſon, ought to be quite revers'd. For, to be born is really to begin to die; and to die is to begin to live, to be born into the World of Spirits, and to begin to live the Life of Angels, and taſte the ineffable Pleaſures of Eternity! To have a clear and intimate Viſion of that Eternal Infinite Truth and Beauty, which this thick Veil of Fleſh conceals from Mortal Eyes! To enjoy infinite Good, without Meaſure or Interruption, or the leaſt Mixture of Evil!

Conſider only the innumerable Evils, from which Death has releaſed your Parent; and the innumerable Benefits, to the Poſſeſſion of which it has brought her; and You cannot think it an Evil, nor conſequently any reaſonable Occaſion of

Sorrow. She is not, indeed, properly and abſolutely Dead. She is Dead only in a relative Senſe. She is Dead to all the Sins, the Vanities and Miſeries of this wretched World. And who would not be glad ſo to die? But ſhe is alive to the Enjoyment of the ſolid Happineſs and eternal Joys of the other World. She is Dead to Men, but Alive to God, and thoſe noble Orders of Beings which inhabit the inviſible Regions. With them ſhe lives and converſes, with infinite Delight and Complacency. Thoſe glorious Beings ſaluted her, at her Arrival at their happy Manſions, with a triumphal Song; and tranſported her new-born Soul with the raviſhing Harmony of Paradiſe!

There now ſhe lives, and ſwims in boundleſs Joy,
Which neither knows to have an End, nor cloy!

'Tis plain therefore, that you can have no Reaſon to indulge an immoderate Sorrow, on Account of your Parent, but that you ought rather, if you wou'd act

act like a Man and a Chriſtian, to rejoice. *

To Mr. *D.*

London, *October* 14, 1709.

SIR,

* *

I proceed now to the Queſtion you propoſe to me, *viz. Whether a Man (ſuppoſe him, if you pleaſe, a Deiſt or Socinian) can be reaſonably puniſh'd for refuſing to join with any Congregation in this Kingdom in the publick Worſhip and Service of God?* The Queſtion I take to be in effect the ſame as thoſe uſual Ones, Whether the Magiſtrate ought not to allow all his Subjects an intire Liberty of Conſcience, in all thoſe Religious Matters which in no wiſe diſturb or prejudice the Publick? Or, Whether he ought not to tolerate all Opinions and Forms of Worſhip, which have

have no direct Tendency to deſtroy the Welfare of the Society? If this is all the Meaning of the Queſtion, ſince you have read Mr. *Lock*'s Writings, wherein (you know) he has admirably proved the Affirmative ſide of the Queſtion, I muſt refer you to them, ſince it would be vain for Me to repeat what He has ſaid on that Point; and the Subject is ſo much exhauſted by him already, that new Arguments would be as difficult to be found, as they are needleſs.

But if you mean, (as the Words ſeem capable of being conſtrued,) not whether a Man ought to be puniſh'd for refuſing to join with *any particular Congregation*, in the publick Worſhip and Service of God; but whether the Magiſtrate ought to puniſh his Subject for abſenting himſelf from, and refuſing to join with *All or any of the Religious Aſſemblies in his Dominions*, or (which is all one) for refuſing to pay the Creator *any publick Worſhip*: 'Tis my Opinion, That if there be but a ſmall Number of ſuch Perſons,

Perſons, the Magiſtrate ought not to compel them, provided they obey the Laws in all other Reſpects, but if their Number be conſiderable, I think he ought to force them to expreſs their Senſe of a Deity by ſome ſort of publick Worſhip: Becauſe he is *the Guardian of the publick Welfare*, and obliged by his Office to preſerve and protect it, and conſequently to oppoſe and ſuppreſs all ſuch Practices, as manifeſtly tend to the Deſtruction or Danger of it; which the Neglect of all open Worſhip of God apparently does; (ſince the Senſe of a Deity, and the practical Principles and Duties of Religion depending thereon, are chiefly maintain'd in Mens Minds by the publick Homage which is conſtantly paid him;) And therefore ought to enforce the publick Profeſſion of ſome Religion or other upon all his Subjects. In ſhort, ſince Government and Religion mutually ſupport and depend upon each other, it concerns them to defend one another's Intereſts, ſo far as they are united with their own.

And

And therefore, tho' the Magiſtrate ought to allow his Subjects the entire Liberty of chuſing their own Religion, (provided it be not inconſiſtent with the Good and Safety of the Society,) yet he ought not to ſuffer them to live like Atheiſts, without profeſſing any Religion at all; becauſe the Senſe of a Deity and the Principles of Religion are the *main Support* of Government and Civil Society. Nor will this Power in the Magiſtrate interfere in the leaſt with Liberty of Conſcience: For ſuppoſe there ſhould be in ſome Country, where the Chriſtian Religion is generally profeſs'd, a conſiderable Number of *Deiſts*, (I mean, ſuch as believe the Exiſtence and Perfections of God, his Providential Government of the World, the Immortality of the Soul, future Rewards and Puniſhments, and generally all the Principles of Natural Religion;) who ſhou'd think they cou'd not, without Sin, join themſelves to any Chriſtian Congregation: What ſhou'd hinder, (ſuppoſing the Magiſtrate to allow an univerſal Toleration,) but

but that theſe *Religious Deiſts* might appoint a Place, Time and Perſons, and all other Circumſtances, publickly to pray to, praiſe and worſhip God according to the Principles of Natural Religion, and, if they pleas'd, to hear Lectures of Morality; ſince theſe are all Duties of Natural Religion, and therefore cou'd not be offenſive to the Conſcience of any *Real Deiſt*. As for *downright Atheiſts*, they cannot pretend Conſcience for abſenting themſelves from the publick Worſhip of God or any thing elſe.

Or if we ſuppoſe only One, or a few *Deiſts*, or of any other Sect, in a Kingdom, it is impoſſible indeed they ſhou'd worſhip God publickly, except they join themſelves to other Congregations; but then the Reaſon of their ſo doing ceaſes, becauſe it cannot be ſuppoſed, that ſo inconſiderable a Number can have any ill Influence on the Minds of the People.

Thus, Sir, I hope, I have given you Satisfaction, as to both Senſes, in which I thought Your Queſtion might be taken.

I the rather ſuſpected it might be the Latter, becauſe I cou'd hardly think, You wou'd propoſe it in the Firſt, after the full and ſatisfactory Anſwer, which the Incomparable Author of the *Letters concerning Toleration* has given to it. In your next, I deſire your Thoughts concerning my Anſwer to it in the ſecond Senſe, and whether You do not agree with me, that the Magiſtrate ought to oblige all his Subjects, publickly to Profeſs and Exerciſe ſome Religion or other. I am,

SIR,

Your moſt Obliged
Humble Servant,
H. NEEDLER.

To

To Mr. *H.*

London, *June*, 1710.

IN Compliance with Your Deſire, and to acquit my ſelf of my Promiſe, I have undertaken to write to You; but not having a Faculty, with my Lord *Rocheſter*, of expatiating upon Nothing, I confeſs, I do not well know with what or how to entertain You. Methinks I am like an aukward young Lover, who not having been uſed to Female Converſation, and to diſcourſe upon thoſe Trifles which are commonly the Subjects of it, is extremely at a loſs how to behave himſelf at his firſt Approaches to his Miſtreſs. However, ſince to a thinking Man nothing of a rational and philoſophical Nature can be ungrateful; I muſt have a very barren Invention, not to be able to furniſh out ſome little Entertainment for one whoſe Taſte ſo many things can pleaſe; and, I believe, I cannot chuſe at preſent a properer Subject to write

write on, than the Pleaſures of Solitude and Retirement, that ſo I may recommend to you that Condition, which will ſhortly be your Lot, and make you reliſh it the better.

Plato was of Opinion, that the Souls of good Men, when ſeparated from the Body, aſcend into the pure Regions of *Æther*, freed from the Clog of cumbrous Matter, and there apply themſelves with extreme Delight to the Contemplation and Viſion of Truth; for which they are fitted by the Purity and Refinedneſs of their Inclinations, as well as by their Emancipation from the Body: whilſt the Souls of bad Men, retaining the ſame ſenſual and impure Inclinations they had in the Body, are uncapable of taſting thoſe ſpiritual and intellectual Pleaſures which the others enjoy; and ſo hover about their Graves, deſiring a Reunion with their Bodies, that they may return again to the Pleaſures of the Animal Life. Juſt ſo it is in a State of Solitude and Retirement; which, I am apt to think, bears the

the neareſt Reſemblance to the State of Separation; for then the Man is, as it were, all Thought, the Mind being but little occupy'd or interrupted by the Senſes: It affects a Perſon either with Happineſs or Miſery according as he is diſpos'd; and tho' there be indeed ſome Few, who delight in Solitude and prefer it before the beſt Society, yet the far greater Part of Mankind are of a very different Temper, and fly from it as they wou'd from a Fiend or Evil Spirit, chuſing rather to be in the worſt Company, than alone. We may compare Theſe, who cannot taſte the ſerene and refined Pleaſures of that State, to thoſe viciated Souls of *Plato*. They can reliſh nothing, but what affects the Imagination. Giddy Vanities, noiſy Mirth, and ſenſual Delights are with them the only true and ſubſtantial Pleaſures. As for Contemplation, that is too dull and melancholy an Entertainment for Perſons of their gay and ſprightly Inclinations. But what a Bugbear ſoever they may think Solitude,

who are unacquainted with it, I make no Queſtion but thoſe who have try'd it have very different Sentiments; and when they have once learn'd how to employ it, find ſuch refined Delights as are hardly to be equal'd. For as there is a great deal of Pleaſure in Contemplation; and the clear Viſion of Truth affects the Mind with the moſt divine and pleaſing Senſation; ſo 'tis in the State of Solitude and Silence only, that the Mind is capable of thinking to any Purpoſe and obtaining any full and clear Viſion of Truth; for there all is calm and ſtill; and the Mind, retiring inwards, withdraws her ſelf from all outward Objects into the ſecret Receſſes of Thought, whilſt the Doors and Avenues of the Senſes are lock'd up. So that in Solitude, and in Solitude only, the greateſt Pleaſure in the World, the Pleaſure of Contemplation is to be enjoy'd; which State therefore every contemplative and philoſophical Mind muſt needs delight in.

I make no Queſtion but you will confirm the Truth of theſe Conjectures by your own Experience. However, fail not to give me a particular Account how you employ your Time, and reliſh your Retirement; for after all, no Theory is to be compar'd to Practice.

I am,

Yours, &c.

H. NEEDLER.

London, June 29, 1710.

SIR,

THOUGH I have a great Eſteem for Mr. *Locke*, and think his Notions in Philoſophy, for the moſt part, very juſt, yet I cannot but diſagree with him in one Point.

In his Diſcourſe on Father *Malbranche*'s Notion, *Of ſeeing all things in God*, he urges, (againſt his Opinion that *Imagination is only a more obſcure and languid Senſation*,) That when we recall into our

Minds by Imagination the moſt pleaſing or painful Senſations we have ever been affected with, we feel no manner of Pleaſure or Pain.

Now this I can by no means allow; for Your Letter has furniſh'd me with a plain Inſtance to the contrary; for whilſt I read over your lively and elegant Deſcription of the Country, which revived in me thoſe Ideas I had formerly received from it, I found my ſelf affected with a Pleaſure, which nothing but that ariſing from the actual Enjoyment of the thing deſcrib'd cou'd exceed. And if the Deſign of it was, as You are pleaſed to intimate, to expreſs your Friendſhip to me, it was ſo far from being *wide of the Mark*, that You cou'd ſcarce have obliged me more, than by giving me ſo charming a Picture of the Face I admire, and whoſe Original You have the Happineſs to enjoy.

Doubtleſs, as the Picture of a Beautiful Object gives the Spectator Delight as well as the Original, ſo there is a ſort of Paint-

Painting to the Imagination as well as to the Eye. What is Poetry but the Painting an Object to the Mind in natural and lively Colours? And an elegant Picture which my Father brought from *Italy*, is but a Copy of *Virgil*'s Deſcription of a Storm.

Whilſt I peruſe Your Letter I almoſt fancy my ſelf in the Country, and ſeem to partake in the Pleaſures which You there ſo eloquently deſcribe, whilſt You lead my wandering Mind thro' obſcure retired Walks;

——Where thick-entwining Shades
High-over-arch'd embow'r; the feather'd Choir
Their various Notes in tuneful Conſort join;
And murm'ring Winds their hoarſer Voice apply,
To lull the eaſie Mind to pleaſing Dreams!

Or preſent my delighted Fancy with the beauteous Proſpects of *aſpiring Hills and verdant Valleys!*

Mr. *Norris* gives us, in one of his Books, an Account of what affected him with

the moſt ſenſible Delight, and wherein he placed his chief worldly Happineſs. It was (to quote his own excellent Words,) in " the Beauty of the Spring, the Mag-" nificence of the Heavens, Solitary " Walks and Gardens, the Reading of " cloſe and fine-wrought Diſcourſes, " Converſation with Men of tuneable " and harmonious Diſpoſitions, and " in Majeſtick and well-compoſed Mu-" ſick.

I muſt needs own my ſelf very much of his Mind, and believe there cannot be a Catalogue of more refined and ſolid Satiſfactions cull'd out of the whole Creation. And yet they are all contain'd under theſe two general Heads: *The Pleaſures of the Country and agreeable Converſation*: (for Muſick it ſelf may be reckon'd a Rural Delight, ſince the airy Choir entertain the Ear with melodious Notes.) And therefore I cannot but think that Man who enjoys them, as to outward Circumſtances, very happy.

You

You ſit perhaps in a pleaſant Meadow, beneath the ſpreading Branches of a venerable Oak, which form a ſhady Canopy over your Head; and regale your Serene Mind with ſome favourite Author, ſome delicious Poet or cloſe-reaſoning Philoſopher; whilſt the cooling *Zephyrs* fan you all around with their odoriferous Breezes, inſpiring a thouſand ſoft Paſſions and charming ineffable Ideas: Or it may be a clear chryſtal Stream glides gently at your Feet, painted here and there with various beautiful Reflections of Light, and repreſenting to the Eye, in its lucid Mirrour, the gay Image of its ſmiling Banks. When wearied with Delights You ſeek Repoſe, the verdant Graſs, adorn'd with Native Flowers, affords you as delicate a Couch as any of the Primitive Race cou'd boaſt, ere Human Life was debauch'd with the needleſs Arts of Luxury.

How completely happy ſhou'd I think my ſelf, if to the Advantages of agreeable Converſation and good Books, (One of which I enjoy in You, and the Other by

your Means,) Providence wou'd add the Bleſſing of a Rural Retreat, and give me Leiſure to enjoy the Favours it has beſtow'd upon me? But I am content to wait; thinking it ſufficient at preſent, that I can in a double Senſe ſubſcribe my ſelf,

SIR,

Your Friend

and humble Servant,

H. NEEDLER.

To Mr. *G.*

London, *May* 24, 1711.

SIR,

IF you had known how welcome a Letter from a Friend always is to me, You wou'd have been under no Apprehenſions of giving me any Diſguſt by Yours, which, on the contrary, was, I aſſure you, very grateful to me. It wou'd indeed have been ſtill much more ſo, if it had ſavour'd more of Sincerity, and leſs of Compliment. There was no need of uſing any Arts to entice me into a Correſpondence, that I was before ſo well inclin'd to; but if there had, this wou'd have been the moſt unlikely of any to prevail with me. I only wiſh, my Letter may be worth the Care you ſeem to expreſs about it. However, to make it as entertaining as I can, I'll give you an Account (ſo far as my Memory will ſerve me) of Dr. *Woodward*'s *Foſſils*, which I am perſuaded will be acceptable to

to you, becauſe it is what you deſired of Mr. *D.* If that Gentleman had been willing to perform this Task, I ſhou'd not have been ſo vain as to have taken it out of his Hands. But ſince he has declin'd it, I thought an Imperfect Account wou'd be better than none.

After having waited a convenient Time in the Anti-chamber, we were conducted by the Servant into an inner Room, where we found the Dr. and two or three Foreigners: Proper Ceremonies being perform'd, we were deſir'd to walk into another Room, in which was the Doctor's Library. He then withdrew, and left us a little while with the Strangers. They were *Griſons*, and cou'd ſpeak *Engliſh* pretty well; And one of them entertain'd us with an Account of the Irruptions of Mount *Veſuvius*; and particularly told us, that ſome Years ſince a Fountain of liquid Metal guſh'd out of the Top of the Mountain, running in a burning Torrent, with great Violence, for ſeveral

ral Days into the Sea: The Metal, when it was cold, was hard and weighty and of a yellowiſh Hue, but ſomewhat different in its Species from any that had ever been ſeen before.

By this Time the Dr. being returned, order'd a Servant to ſet a Table before us; by which I perceiv'd that our Philoſophic Banquet was going to be ſerv'd up. And 'accordingly he brought from a Cabinet the ſeveral Drawers, in which this Treaſure of *Foſſils* was contain'd.

The firſt Courſe conſiſted of a fine Collection of *Engliſh* Agates, painted by Nature with a great Variety of beautiful Colours, and poliſh'd by Art to an exquiſite Smoothneſs and Brightneſs; among theſe were ſeveral very fine Rubies, Amethyſts, Saphires, and other precious Stones, all of *Engliſh* Growth. I took particular Notice of a couple of Stones cut out of Flints and ſet in Rings, which for their Brightneſs and Luſtre ſeem'd ſcarce inferior to Diamonds. In the next Place, ſeveral Pieces of the Original

ginal Oar of all ſorts of Metals were produced, as Lead, Tin, Iron, Braſs and Copper. Theſe were all accompanied with Pieces of Chryſtal, which every one had ting'd with a different Dye. The Chryſtal found incorporated with the Lead Oar is yellow, and the ſame as Amber; that which belongs to the Iron Oar is red; out of it the Ruby is cut; ſometimes the Iron gives the Chryſtal a blue Tincture, and converts it into Saphire. The Amethyſt owes its Beauty to Tin, and the Emerald to Copper. So that all precious Stones are only Chryſtal, tinged with various Colours, according to the ſeveral Oars it is mingled with. We ſaw alſo a Piece of pure tranſparent Chryſtal; it was in the Form of a Pillar of ſix Sides, which is the natural Shape that Chryſtal always grows in. The Dr. inform'd us, that the ſame Metal always dyes the Chryſtal with the ſame Colour, which by lying much nearer the Surface of the Earth than its proper Oar, ſerves to Miners as a certain Index of the Metal

tal that lyes beneath. He told us likewiſe of a certain uſeful Diſcovery he had made relating to Metals: Among the Oars of Lead he ſhew'd us a yellow Subſtance, which look'd almoſt like Bee's-wax, being light and hard and of a very rough irregular Form. This he ſaid was neglected by the Miners as of no Uſe, till he ſhew'd them, that the beſt and pureſt Lead might be drawn from it; ſince which Diſcovery, many thouſand Pounds Worth has been made.

After we had ſufficiently feaſted our Curioſity with Metals and Minerals, we were preſented, for a ſecond Courſe, with a Collection of *Antidiluvian* Relicks; which certainly, if any thing, may juſtly be valued for their Antiquity, (being of no leſs than four thouſand Years ſtanding,) as well as for the many other remarkable things which may be obſerv'd in them. Among theſe were ſeveral Pieces of Stone, Iron, Braſs and other hard Bodies, impreſs'd with the Forms of ſeveral Fiſhes Shells as exactly, as if they had

had been caſt in ſo many Moulds. There were ſeveral Shells of Fiſhes full of Flint, and of Iron and other hard Subſtances; and ſeveral Pieces of Stone and Iron, which having been broke were found ſtamp'd with the Prints of Leaves enclos'd in them. He ſhew'd us likewiſe a great Number of Shells of Fiſhes, which had been found enclos'd in Sandſtone and other hard ſubterraneous Bodies; moſt of which were not at all impair'd by Time, but look'd as fair and entire as if they had been juſt taken out of the Sea. Theſe Shells are found in all Parts of the Earth in prodigious Plenty, in all Subſtances which were hard enough to preſerve them from the Injuries of Time. The Horns of Beaſts and the Trunks of Trees are alſo often found in the Bowels of the Earth. 'Tis remarkable that the Horns of *American* Beaſts, the Shells of *American* Fiſh, and *American* Trees are frequently dug up in this Iſland, but never any of thoſe peculiar to the *Eaſt-Indies*. He ſuppoſes, that

that theſe Shells were brought out by the Flood upon the Earth; which, at that Time, was to a good Depth diſſolv'd into one fluid Maſs; and that when the Flood ſubſided, they ſunk down to that Depth we now find them in; the Terreſtrial Subſtances, in which they were buried, recovering in time their original Hardneſs: And becauſe the Tide or Current of the Flood was from the Weſt towards the Eaſt, it bore along with it hither only the Spoils of thoſe Countries, which lye weſterly of us.

He builds abundance of fine Speculations on theſe *Foſſils*, which he ſeems to eſteem as highly as Gold. And indeed I muſt needs ſay, that the wonderful and well-grounded Conſequences he draws from them, in his *Eſſay towards a Natural Hiſtory of the Earth*, (whatever the incurious Part of the World may think,) fully prove them worthy of the Value he ſets on them. But 'tis the Way of the unthinking Part of Mankind, to condemn all thoſe things as impertinent

tinent Trifles, whoſe Uſes they are too ſhort-ſighted to be able to diſcover.

But to return; I muſt not forget to acquaint you, that he ſhew'd us half a dozen Octavo Manuſcripts, upon theſe *Foſſils* and other Heads of Natural Philoſophy, which he promiſes to publiſh if he can get Time to finiſh them. He ſhew'd us likewiſe a little Book written by Mr. *Scheuckzer*, Profeſſor of the Mathematicks at *Zurich*, entitled * *Herbarium Diluvianum*, wherein the Author gives an Account of ſeveral Plants and Herbs of the *Antidiluvian* World, which have been found inclos'd in Metals and Minerals; every one of which is there repreſented by a Copper Plate. It was compos'd with the Aſſiſtance and at the Deſire of the Dr. who holds a Correſpondence with this Ingenious Foreigner.

When we had ſeen all theſe Curioſities, (which he told us were not above a ſixth Part of his whole Collection,)

* *See an Account of this Book in Monſieur* Le Clerc's Bibliotheque Choiſie, Tome xx. p. 430.

on,) we took our Leaves, highly ſatisfied with our courteous Entertainment. I am,

SIR,

Your Faithful
Humble Servant,
H. NEEDLER.

To Mr. *H.*

Portſmouth, *July* 5, 1711.

I Shou'd not ſo long have deny'd my ſelf the Satisfaction of writing to You, and retarded thereby the much greater one of receiving your Anſwer, if my Affairs wou'd have permitted me to write ſooner. For I can truly ſay, I think no Inconvenience which I ſuffer by my preſent Circumſtances ſo great, as that of being baniſh'd from my Friends: And nothing ſo much alleviates that Misfortune, as the receiving Letters from them; which

is an imperfect way of converſing with them. I ſo little regard the other Inconveniencies of Travelling, and think them ſo unworthy to be compar'd with the manifold Profit and Delight which may be reap'd from it, that I cou'd be very glad to range over the World in the Company of a ſelect Friend.

Methinks it was finely anſwer'd by *Plato*, when he was ask'd what Countryman he was, *That he was an Inhabitant of the Univerſe.* That noble Philoſopher ſcorn'd to acknowledge any leſs Place than the whole World for his Country. 'Twas by travelling over it, he acquir'd that Wiſdom, which has juſtly made him renown'd to all Poſterity. It was from *India* and *Egypt*, that he fetch'd the deepeſt Secrets of his Philoſophy.

It muſt doubtleſs yield abundance of Delight as well as Inſtruction to a curious and inquiſitive Mind, to obſerve the different Opinions, Religions, Manners and Cuſtoms of the ſeveral Nations of the Earth. What an inexpreſſible Pleaſure muſt it afford

ford a philoſophical Mind, to ſurvey the wonderful Works of God, in the various Parts of this terreſtrial Globe! If God is known by his Works, it muſt needs follow, that they who have ſeen moſt of them, will have the compleateſt Knowledge of Him; and it is a ſufficient Recommendation of the Knowledge of Nature, to ſay that it leads us to the Knowledge of God. If God made the World to diſplay his own Attributes and Glory, his Deſign ſeems to be in Part defeated by thoſe, who have not Curioſity enough to examine and conſider it.

'Tis affirm'd by the Writers of the Natural Hiſtory of *America*, that there are in that Country as many Species of Plants and Animals, wholly diſtinct from thoſe in the reſt of the World; as the other three Parts contain together. How great a Pleaſure then muſt it give any one, who has any Taſte for Natural Philoſophy, to feaſt his Curioſity with the Sight of all theſe Novelties? What an agreeable Amuſement muſt it afford him, to be ſur-

priſed with a new Race of Beings, which he had never ſeen before? And how many pleaſing Speculations muſt it raiſe in his Mind? If the bare Reading the Deſcriptions of Travellers be ſo entertaining, with what an exquiſite Delight wou'd the actual Sight of thoſe things affect us?

For my part, I ſhou'd not only admire ſtately Buildings, ſhining in their full Luſtre; but a certain ineffable melancholy Pleaſure wou'd fill my Soul, at the Sight of the very Ruins of renown'd Piles, and celebrated Cities; when I took Occaſion from thence to conſider the Mutability of all human Things, and the Precariouſneſs of all worldly Grandeur! In viewing the Remains of Ancient *Rome*, I ſhou'd be apt to break out into ſuch Exclamations as theſe; "O *Rome!* Thou that once "ſtiledſt thy ſelf *The Miſtreſs of the World*, "*The Glory of all the Earth*, what is now "become of all thy boaſted Grandeur "and Magnificence? Where are now "thy Capitols, thy Amphitheatres, thy "Trium-

" Triumphal Arches, and the reſt of " thoſe noble Pieces of Architecture " which ſo long ſtruggled with Time? Be- " hold! they all have ſubmitted to the " univerſal Law of Fate, as well as their " Founders; and thoſe very Monuments, " by which they hoped to preſerve their " Names to Eternity, are themſelves de- " moliſh'd and deſtroy'd; and nothing of " them now remains, but theſe wretched " Fragments, to declare to the World, " that they ever had a Being."

On viſiting the Pyramids of *Egypt*, thoſe ſtately Dormitories of ancient Kings, I ſhou'd be forced to acknowledge, that human Induſtry ſeems to have conquer'd the force of *Time*, in raiſing thoſe ſtupendious Piles, which it does not yet appear to be in *his* Power to deſtroy. *He* has in vain attempted it for ſeveral thouſand Years; and whether they may not be able to withſtand *his* Aſſaults, as long as the World ſhall endure, is what no one can determine! How ſhou'd I admire the prodigious Labour of the Workmen and Skill

of the Architects, conſpicuous in thoſe mighty Fabricks!

But on conſidering the End they were built for, which in all Appearance was to immortalize the Founders in the Memory of Poſterity; how vain and ridiculous wou'd they appear? For, alas! tho' the Pyramids themſelves remain after ſo many thouſand Years, the Founders of them are altogether unknown and forgotten. But if they had attain'd their End, and actually preſerv'd themſelves from Oblivion, of what Advantage wou'd it have been to them? What Good can it do any one, to be talk'd of, when he himſelf is not; or at leaſt not ſenſible of it? But Man is ſo fond of Exiſtence, that he catches at the very Shadow of it; and becauſe he cannot enjoy a Real, he comforts himſelf with an Imaginary Immortality.

Thus I ſhou'd entertain and amuſe my Thoughts, if I were to travel to thoſe Places. But, methinks, I ſhou'd be particularly deſirous to viſit the moſt remote Parts of the Earth. I ſhou'd not be ſatiſfied

fied with taking a View of the neighbouring Countries of *France*, *Germany*, *Spain* and *Italy*, which are the Places Gentlemen commonly travel to; they are too well known, and too little different from my own Country. I wou'd fain ſee *Turkey*, *Africa*, and the *Eaſt* and *Weſt Indies*. I ſhou'd hope to be entertain'd with abundance of Curioſities in thoſe far-diſtant Countries.

I know, you agree with me in my Inclinations for Travelling, as well as in moſt other things. Who knows but that, one time or other, Providence may give us an Opportunity of fulfilling our Deſires. Be that as it will, of this you may be aſſur'd, That where-ever I go, while I depart not from my ſelf, I ſhall continue to be

Yours Sincerely,

H. NEEDLER.

To Mr. *D.*

Portſmouth, *July* 5, 1711.

Dear SIR,

IT was with much Impatience I expected your Letter, and no leſs Joy that I at length receiv'd it. A Letter from You wou'd at any time have been welcome to me, but was particularly ſo at this Juncture, when I am baniſh'd from all my Friends, and doom'd to converſe with Perſons of a Diſpoſition altogether foreign from my own; ſo that if it were not for honeſt *Horace*, and Sir * *Iſaac*, I ſhou'd be wholly ſeparated from all Commerce with the Learned World. And when I retire into my Chamber to enjoy an Hour's Converſation with Them, my Ears are ſo violently aſſaulted from all Quarters with the Cries of Children, (with which the Street, where I lodge, abounds,) that I might ſtudy with almoſt as much Atten-

* *Sir* Iſaac Newton's *Philoſophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica.*

Attention in a Belfry, when the Bells are ringing. Sometimes I am ſo vex'd with the inceſſant Din, that I almoſt envy the Deaf, who have the Happineſs of perpetually enjoying that Quiet and Silence, which I ſeek for in vain. I am then very ſenſibly convinced of the Truth of Mr. *Lock*'s Obſervation, That Nature has acted very wiſely in making the Senſe of Hearing no more acute; for ſince, at preſent, it ſo much interrupts the Attention of the Mind, if it were acuter, it wou'd do ſo proportionably more.

I readily ſubſcribe to all you have ſaid about *Love* and *Friendſhip*. You have exactly expreſs'd my own Sentiments concerning thoſe Paſſions. The Vanity of the former, (as commonly purſued) You clearly ſhew by Reaſon; the latter, both Reaſon and Experience teach me to eſteem the choiceſt Bleſſing of Human Life; the ſweeteſt, nobleſt, and moſt rational of all Delights!

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In order to make you ſome Return, I intend, in this Letter, to give you my Thoughts on a Subject, which you know I have long deſign'd to conſider, I mean the Vanity and Folly of a Man's being proud of his own Parts and Learning, and deſpiſing others for falling ſhort of himſelf in theſe Reſpects. I need not, I hope, aſſure you, that I do not addreſs theſe Reflections to you, as a Perſon whom I ſuppoſe to ſtand in need of any ſuch Admonitions. No; I am very ſenſible that your natural Diffidence and Modeſty diſpoſe you to think rather more lowly, than more highly of your ſelf, than you ought. I only communicate them to you as a Friend, in hopes they may afford ſome Entertainment to Your Thoughts in reading, as they did to Mine in writing them.

IT muſt be allow'd, that true Knowledge and Learning, that is, the clear Perception of neceſſary and demonſtrable Truth, (for it is in this, that true Knowledge

ledge conſiſts,) are very noble and divine Perfections. All the World is ſatisfied that the more a Man truly knows, the more perfect and accompliſh'd he is: but, alas! how little true Knowledge is there in the World! The far greater Part of the Pretenders to Learning and Intellectual Perfection, ground their Claims upon Nothing leſs than true Knowledge; tho' that alone can add any Real Improvement to the Mind. How many are there, that puff themſelves up with Wind and Vapour, valuing themſelves for poſſeſſing, and deſpiſing others for wanting thoſe Acquirements, which give no Real Perfection to the rational Faculties, ſuch as Languages, Hiſtory, Criticiſm, and whatever is not included in the preceding Definition of true Knowledge? There is no neceſſity of conſidering the Imperfection of true Knowledge, as circumſtanciated in Man, to ſhew the Vanity of that high Opinion, which theſe Men often conceive of themſelves. It is ſufficient to ſhew, that the Knowledge of theſe things cannot

cannot give any real Improvement to the Mind; which will appear Evident, if we conſider that God, whoſe Underſtanding is eſſentially perfect, might yet not have known them; and that becauſe he need not have created the World; and ſo they wou'd never have exiſted.

But let us ſuppoſe, that the Knowledge of Hiſtorical Facts, of Contingent Truths, cou'd add ſome Real Improvement to the Mind. Let us ſuppoſe a Man the wiſer, that is, the more intellectually improv'd, for knowing that *Brutus* ſtabb'd *Julius Cæſar* in the Senate-Houſe, or that the ſame *Julius Cæſar* made a Voyage to *Britain*; yet, after all, do we truly and properly *know* theſe things? Do we ſee evidently, that it is abſolutely neceſſary, they ſhou'd be ſo? Can we demonſtrate that *Julius Cæſar* came into *Britain*, or that *Alexander the Great* extended his Conqueſts as far as the *Indian* Ocean? It may perhaps be anſwer'd, that tho' we have indeed neither Intuitive nor Demon-

Demonſtrative Evidence of the Truth of theſe things, yet we have as good Proof of them as the Nature of the thing is capable of, and ſuch as cannot fail to convince a reaſonable Man. I grant it: But from that very Conceſſion, I contend, that they are not the true Objects of Science; ſince, to ſay the Truth, we do not really *know*, but only *believe* them, tho' upon the higheſt ground of Probability. If this Reaſoning be juſt, as, I think, he that duly conſiders it, muſt acknowledge it is; how little will many have left to boaſt of, who make the greateſt Figure both in their own and other Peoples Eyes for Learning? When the Stock of ſuch Mens Knowledge is refin'd from the Droſs of Probabilities, Conjectures, Hiſtorical Facts, *&c.* how ſmall a Share of genuine Science will remain? How poor will many be found at laſt, who, like the rich Man in the Goſpel, bleſs themſelves in their mighty Stores of falſe Learning? For none have commonly their Reaſon leſs improv'd than Theſe. They ſeem to Me as

ridiculous as a Man wou'd be, who having taken a great deal of Pains to amaſs counterfeit Gold, and preſumptuouſly boaſting of his Riches, ſhou'd be found to be really poſſeſs'd of little or none of the true Oar.

But ſuppoſing that the Knowledge upon which we value our ſelves and contemn others, be genuine, and ſuch as is indeed perfective of the Human Intellect. Alas! how ſmall a Portion of it can the moſt inlighten'd lay claim to? And upon what precarious and uncertain Terms does he hold that little? There is no Proportion at all between our Ignorance and our Knowledge; for the things we know not, are ſtrictly Infinite; but thoſe we know, are not only Finite, but very Few in Number. Our Knowledge does not only infinitely fall ſhort of comprehending all that is knowable abſolutely, but even all that is knowable to Man in his preſent State. It is certain, that the actual Knowledge of all Men that ever liv'd, put together, falls infinitely

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ſhort of that which Man is, abſolutely ſpeaking, capable of knowing. How much more then muſt the Knowledge of any particular Man, (which is ſo much inferior to the actual Knowledge of all Men ſumm'd together,) fall ſhort of comprehending all that Human Nature is capable of knowing? They that have a little conſider'd the Mathematick Sciences are ſenſible, that they are infinitely fertile, and that by ten thouſand Years Study a Man cou'd not exhauſt the Treaſure of demonſtrable Truths, which they contain. Nay farther, it is certain, That the Propoſitions, which may be demonſtrated of any ſingle Geometrick Figure, as ſuppoſe a Triangle, are ſtrictly Infinite. If we compare our Knowledge with that of ſuperior Intelligences, it will indeed bear *ſome* Proportion to it, becauſe *finite* too. But in all Probability a very *little* one: Nay it is probable that ſome of them may know a vaſt number of Truths, which we are not only actually ignorant of, but, by reaſon of the Narrowneſs of our Faculties, naturally *uncapable*

capable of comprehending. Among the many Orders of ſuperior Intelligences, which probably ſubſiſt in the Univerſe, there are perhaps ſome, whoſe Knowledge as far exceeds ours, as the whole Ocean does a drop of Water, or the whole Globe of Earth a Grain of Sand. And yet their Knowledge, how extenſive ſoever it be ſuppos'd, is ſwallow'd up and loſt in the boundleſs Immenſity of the divine Wiſdom; of which, all created Wiſdom is but a Participation; and to which it bears no manner of Proportion: For Nothing *Finite* bears any Proportion to that which is *Infinite*.

And yet by what an uncertain and precarious Tenure do we hold even this ſmall Pittance of Knowledge? A thouſand Accidents may rob us of it. A Blow or a Fever may deprive us, not only of that Stock of Learning which with much Pains and Induſtry we had perhaps been many Years acquiring, but likewiſe of the very *Capacity* to retrieve it: And commonly old Age reduces us again to Child-

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hood, eracing out of the Memory thoſe Ideas, wherewith it was ſtored.

But it is time to proceed to the ſecond thing propoſed, namely, To ſhew the Vanity and Folly of deſpiſing others, for falling ſhort of us, in reſpect of Parts and Learning. When we compare our-ſelves with ſuperior Intelligences, we find no Temptation for Pride, but much to prompt Humility: But when we view our-ſelves with other Men, whom we think inferior to us in theſe reſpects, we are apt to ſwell with the Thought of our Pre-eminence above them, and to look down upon them with Contempt and Scorn, as if they were a whole Species below us. But, alas! what mighty Advantage is this that we ſo much value our-ſelves for enjoying, and deſpiſe others for wanting? How little is the Difference between the wiſeſt Philoſopher, and the moſt ignorant Peaſant? The pooreſt Flower in the Field, the ſmalleſt Blade of Graſs will

baffle the Underſtanding of the one, as well as of the other. Perhaps he that thou deſpiſeſt for his Ignorance, was born with as good Natural Parts and Faculties as thy ſelf; and all the Difference between you, which to thee appears ſo great, may ariſe merely from the want of the ſame Education, the ſame favourable Circumſtances of Life as thou enjoyeſt. The Difference at moſt is but accidental. If the Cauſe of it does not lie in the outward Circumſtances of Life, it lies at fartheſt no deeper than the Body. His Soul is in it ſelf of the ſame Specific Nature as thine, and naturally capable of as high a Degree of intellectual Light and Perfection, tho' it has the Misfortune at preſent to be conſorted with a Body, whoſe Organs are not ſo well adapted to perform its Operations. Perhaps the Structure of his Brain, that nice and wonderful Inſtrument of the Mind, is not ſo happy and delicate as thine. Thou might'ſt as well argue that a Muſician wanted Skill, be-

becauſe he cou'd not play finely upon an Inſtrument out of tune, as that his Soul is defective in its natural Faculties, becauſe it cannot exert them in an ill-diſpoſed Body. Many Accidents may bring thee to a Level with him, or even turn the Scales and ſink thee below him. Thy Mind, whilſt thou liv'ſt in this World, depends upon thy Body in its Operations, as well as his; and *that* is liable to be diſorder'd and put out of tune by a thouſand Accidents, which thou canſt neither foreſee nor prevent. At leaſt Death will certainly put an end to thy ſhort Pre-eminence: *That* brings all to an Equality, as to the Endowments of the Mind, as well as in all other Reſpects. In the Grave there is no more Diſtinction between the Wiſe and Fooliſh, the Learned and Ignorant; than between the Rich and Poor, the Noble and Ignoble. And if Separate Souls enjoy different Degrees of Light and Knowledge, there is Reaſon to believe that they are not diſtributed in the ſame Proportion as in this Life,

but by quite different Laws and Meaſures.

I am, SIR,

Your faithful humble Servant,

H. NEEDLER.

To Mr. D.

Portſmouth, *July* 15, 1711.

SIR,

WHEN in my laſt I aſſerted, that the Knowledge of hiſtorical Facts cou'd give no real Perfection to the rational Faculties, I did not intend to except even thoſe Miracles and Tranſactions, on which Chriſtianity is founded. Nor do I yet conceive that it is either falſe or impious to affirm, that the Knowledge of any Miracle or other Matter of Fact contain'd in the Goſpel-hiſtory, adds no real Perfection to the rational Faculties of him that knows it; if by *rational Facul-*

Faculties be underſtood, what I there intended by them, the ſame as *Underſtanding*. But if that Phraſe be taken to denote the whole reaſonable Soul, as endued with the Faculties of *Underſtanding* and *Will*, or as *a moral Agent*, (in which Senſe you ſeem to underſtand it) I am far from denying, that the Knowledge of the Goſpel-hiſtory has a direct Tendency to perfect the *rational Faculties*. The Caſe is really this. Man may be conſider'd in a twofold Capacity; either as an *Intelligent Being*, or as a *Free Agent*; and accordingly he is capable of a double Perfection, *Intellectual* and *Moral*; his *Intellectual* Perfection conſiſts in Science or the clear Knowledge of Truth; his *Moral* in Virtue, or the conſtant Choice of Good. Now the Knowledge of the Goſpel-hiſtory does not perfect the Soul in the firſt Senſe, any more than the Knowledge of any other Matters of Fact; and for the ſame Reaſons; nor indeed was Revelation intended to give Man that Kind of Perfection: But however,

it directly tends to perfect the Soul in the ſecond Senſe, that is, *Morally*; for, the very Aim and Deſign of the Goſpel is to regulate Mens Wills and Affections. And in that Senſe, the Text you mention is to be underſtood: For, we are not enjoin'd therein to acquire *intellectual*, but *moral Perfection*.

Having by this time, I hope, reconcil'd you to what I ſaid concerning Hiſtory, I intend to employ the remaining Part of this Letter, in attempting to bring you over to another Opinion, which, I remember, you diſagreed to, when I formerly propos'd it. The Opinion I mean is this; *That a Creature cannot poſſibly continue to exiſt of itſelf, but will neceſſarily drop into nothing, if not ſupported by the Divine Power, preſerving it in Being*. I know you have great Authorities on your ſide; for the Schoolman *Durandus*, and the Biſhop of *Salisbury* have expreſsly embraced the ſame Opinion; but if there were occaſion, I could cite as *great* in favour of *mine*; particularly

larly almoſt all the Schoolmen have been on this ſide of the Queſtion. But ſince Truth is not to be judg'd of by Votes, I ſhall wave them, and proceed to the Reaſons, which (as I think,) demonſtrate, That no Creature can continue to exiſt one Moment longer than the Divine Power ſuſtains it in Being.

Firſt, The Cauſe that gave Exiſtence to Creatures was the Divine Will that they ſhould exiſt. Creatures then are the Effects of the Divine Will. Conſequently a Creature, having by the Divine Will been put into Being, muſt neceſſarily fall back into Nothing, if that Will ceaſes; for, the only Cauſe why it came into Being, being the Divine Will, if that be removed, it cannot poſſibly remain in Being; according to the common logical Maxim, *Sublatâ Causâ, tollitur Effectus*; ſo that Creatures owe to the Efficacy of the Divine Will the Continuance, as well as the firſt Commencement of their Exiſtence. Or thus; You grant that Creatures are brought into Being

by, and ſo owe the firſt Moment of their Exiſtence to the Divine Will. We may then conſider a Creature, at leaſt in the firſt Moment of its Exiſtence, as an Effect depending upon the Divine Will, or (leſt you ſhould except againſt that Expreſſion,) upon the creating Act of God (whatever it be) as its Cauſe. Let us ſuppoſe then, that God ceaſes to Will its Exiſtence, or to put forth that Act which gives it Being. Is it not manifeſt, that it muſt neceſſarily fall back into its original Nothing? For ſince it is to the ſole Efficacy of the Creative Act of God that it owes its Being, (as in this Caſe you muſt needs allow,) certainly it cannot ſubſiſt after that Action is removed; any more than a Stone or other heavy Body, having been lifted up into the Air, can hang there of itſelf without Support, after the Hand, which raiſed it, is removed. Beſides, if a Creature can exiſt, *after* that Action of God, whereby it was produced, is *removed*, why might it not as well have exiſted, *before* it

it was *put*; ſince, it ſeems, it can ſubſiſt without it, and does not depend upon it for its Exiſtence?

Secondly, If Creatures do not depend upon the Divine Will for the Continuance of their Being, God cannot poſſibly Annihilate them. For, To be *Annihilated*, is to ceaſe to Be; and to *Annihilate*, is to Cauſe to ceaſe to Be. But God could not Cauſe Creatures to ceaſe to Be, if he did not Cauſe them to Be; for Nothing can be *Annihilated*, but by the Removal, or Sublation of the *Cauſe* whereon it depends. Wherefore, if Creatures do not depend upon any Action of God, it is not in his Power to Annihilate them. The main Hinge upon which this Argument turns, is this Propoſition, That Nothing can be annihilated but by the Removal of its Cauſe; which, however, I think is very clear; for, ſince a Cauſe is *id cujus vi aliquid eſt, That, by the Virtue or Efficacy of which any thing exiſts*; *or, That, whereon any thing depends for its Exiſtence*, it would be a Contradiction to ſuppoſe a-

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ny thing annihilated, but by the Sublation of its Cauſe. And yet, if this Propoſition be granted, (*viz. that Creatures exiſt of themſelves, and ſo depend on no Cauſe which may be removed,*) will it not demonſtratively follow, that they cannot ceaſe to Be?

It may be objected to this, that 'tis to retrench and diminiſh the Divine Power, to affirm, that it cannot produce a Creature ſo perfect, as to be able to exiſt of it ſelf, after it has been once put into Being. I anſwer; That ſince it appears that continual Dependence is the neceſſary Condition of a Creature, to deny that God can make an Independent Creature, or a Creature that ſhall not need the continual Support of his Power to uphold it in Being, is no more a Limitation of it, than to deny that he can make an Omniſcient, Omnipotent, or Eternal Creature, or ſuch a one as ſhall be indowed with any of his Incommunicable Attributes; of which, *Abſolute Independence or Self-exiſtence is the*

the chief. On the contrary; This Notion ſeems to Me ſo far from diſhonouring or abaſing the Deity, that it gives us the moſt Auguſt and Tremendous Idea of his Divine Power and Majeſty, that can be imagin'd, whilſt it repreſents Him as the *true Atlas*, who continually ſuſtains the Univerſe, which otherwiſe would inſtantly drop into Nothing; and all this Multiform Scene of Beings, as depending conſtantly and intirely upon his Will for their Exiſtence, and ſubſiſting merely by his *good Pleaſure*. He need not *Do* any thing to *Annihilate* the World; 'tis ſufficient, to *ceaſe to uphold it*. Should He, but for One Moment, withdraw his All-ſupporting Arm, Univerſal Nature would ſink into Nothing!

O God, how Glorious and Excellent a Being thou art! Thou ſitteſt inthron'd in Eternity, array'd with Majeſty and Power; whilſt Millions of Worlds depend upon Thy Nod; and Thy very *Will itſelf* neceſſarily produces whatſoever thou *Willeſt*; ſo that 'tis impoſſible thou ſhouldſt

ſhouldſt deſire any thing *in vain*, or find any Difficulty in effecting what thou deſireſt. Thou ſpok'ſt the Word; and the World was made. Thou only ſaidſt, *Let it Be*; and it *Was*. Thy Will alone was able to execute itſelf. Thou hadſt no Occaſion to uſe any *Means* or *Inſtruments* to perform it. But that Almighty *Fiat*, by the myſterious Energy whereof the World was created, was no *periſhing tranſitory Word*; but a Voice which is ſtill utter'd, and muſt as long as the World remains!

I cannot forbear mentioning on this Occaſion the Image, (which, I remember, Mr. *D.* told us, he ſaw in a Church at *Bruſſels*,) of an old Man of a large Size and ſinewy Strength, holding a Ball in his right Hand with an outſtretch'd Arm. This was indeed a piece of Superſtition: However, it aptly repreſents the Dependence of the World upon God, who truly ſuſtains it by his Almighty Arm.

But,

But, if this Doctrine be true, how vain and ſelf-inconſiſtent will the Notions of thoſe Men be found, who, though they acknowledge a God and that he created the World, yet fancy that he left it to ſhift for it ſelf,, without taking any farther Care about it; ſince it appears hereby, that the Providence of God is abſolutely neceſſary to preſerve, not only the *Order* and *Well-Being*, but the *very Being* of things.

I think your Animadverſions on our Modern Comedies very juſt. I always was of Opinion, that they tend to debauch Mens Manners; and we find by Experience, that they who are moſt converſant in them, are ſeldom Perſons of Exemplary Virtue.

We have been this laſt Week ſo full of Buſineſs, that I cou'd not conveniently write ſooner; and therefore hope you will excuſe my Delay, and not puniſh

niſh it by taking Pattern from it your ſelf. I am,

SIR,

Your moſt obliged humble Servant,

H. NEEDLER.

To Mr. D.

Portſmouth, *July* 27, 1711.

Dear Sir,

I Cannot but acknowledge my-ſelf extremely obliged to you for your kind and entertaining Letters; and look upon it as none of the leaſt of thoſe many Favours you have been pleaſed to confer upon me, that you take ſo much Pains to alleviate the Uncomfortableneſs of my preſent Circumſtances.

I am glad I have ſo well ſatisfied you, in relation to the Objection you made to what I had ſaid concerning Hiſtory.

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As for the Biſhop of *Sarum*'s Objections againſt the Notion I maintained in my laſt; I think (with all due Deference to ſo great an Authority,) that when thoroughly cleared from all Ambiguity of Expreſſion, they will be found to have no great Weight in them. To make this appear, I will conſider the Paſſage quoted in your Letter. † *There is a common Notion in the World,* ſays his Lordſhip; *That things would fall back into nothing of themſelves, if they were not preſerved by the ſame infinite Power that made them: But without queſtion it is an Act of the ſame infinite Power to reduce a Being to Nothing, that it is to bring a Being out of Nothing.* Now this Aſſertion, which his Lordſhip lays down as the Foundation of his Reaſoning, is ſo far from being *without queſtion*, that it is plainly *falſe*, unleſs he begs the Queſtion. For, upon Suppoſition that things do continually depend upon an Act of the infinite Power of God for their

† *See the late Biſhop of* Sarum's *Expoſition of the Thirty nine Articles*; p. 30. *of the third Edition.*

their Exiſtence, ſo that if that Act were removed, they would immediately fall back into Nothing, what can be more Evident than that, in order to annihilate any Being, 'tis ſufficient for God to ceaſe to put forth that Act of his infinite Power by which it ſubſiſts? So that, ſuppoſing this ſide of the Queſtion, a Creature may be annihilated without any Action at all, either on the Part of God or any other Being, purely by the removal of that Action of God by which it ſubſiſts.

But if we ſuppoſe the other ſide of the Queſtion, (which is the thing in Diſpute;) *viz.* That a Creature having been once put into Being, can continue to exiſt of it ſelf, without any *new Cauſality or Influence*, (as his Lordſhip expreſſes it;) ſtill it will not be true, that it is an Act of the ſame infinite Power to reduce a Being to Nothing, as to bring a Being out of Nothing; for upon that Suppoſition, Annihilation will be abſolutely impoſſible; and God, tho' he has created things and is endued with infinite Power, yet cannot poſſibly

Anni-

annihilate them: From the Abſurdity of which neceſſary Conſequence I argu'd in my laſt, for the Falſhood of the Suppoſition.

So that if we ſuppoſe one ſide of the Queſtion; to reduce a Being to Nothing will be no Act at all of *infinite* or any other *Power*, but the bare *Abſence* or *Removal* of that Act, by which it ſubſiſts. If we ſuppoſe the other; Annihilation will be impoſſible to infinite Power it ſelf, becauſe it will imply a flat Contradiction; as I have ſhewn at large in my laſt Letter.

The Propoſition being thus refuted, the Conſequence which the Biſhop draws from it, in Oppoſition to the continual Dependence of things upon God, *viz.* *That whatever has once a Being, muſt of its Nature continue ſtill to Be, without any new Cauſality or Influence*, falls of courſe. However I cannot but obſerve that his Lordſhip, by affirming that whatever has once a Being will continue to exiſt *of its Nature*, ſeems to attribute

ſuch a Self-exiſtence to Creatures, as I always thought to be the incommunicable Prerogative of the Eternal Deity; and, at the ſame time, makes Annihilation Impoſſible. For, I defy any one to ſhew, how any thing can be more Self-exiſtent, or more Unannihilable, than by exiſting of it ſelf and *of its Nature*. And if it be Natural to a Being, *as a Being*, to continue in Exiſtence, we may as well ſuppoſe God making a Square Circle, or doing any other Contradiction, as annihilating any thing.

As for the Conſequence, which his Lordſhip draws from the Suppoſition of Creatures ſubſiſting by Virtue of an Act of the Divine Power upholding them in Being, *viz. That then it muſt be acknowledged, that a Tendency to Annihilation is the Conſequent of a created Being*; I muſt confeſs, I do not very well know, what is meant by a *Tendency to Annihilation*. If it means an *Inability* to ſubſiſt of themſelves, I readily grant, nay contend that there is in all created Beings ſuch an Inability.

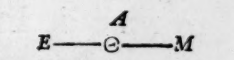
bility. But what Abſurdity can be drawn from that Conceſſion, I do not ſee. For, there is no *Endeavour* in the Nature of things to Not-being, to make it a *Violence* done to their Natures, to cauſe them to exiſt. They do not at all reſiſt the Action of God, which gives them Being. They are purely indifferent to Being or Not-being; and all their Tendency to Not-being, conſiſts in a mere Impotence or Inability to Be of themſelves.

This whole Matter may be illuſtrated by comparing Being to Motion, and Not-being to Reſt, and a Creature in general to Matter, which is the Subject of them. For as Reſt is a mere Privation of Motion; ſo is Not-being of Being. As Matter is of it-ſelf indifferent to Motion or Reſt, and naturally capable of either; ſo a Creature is likewiſe in it-ſelf indifferent to Being or Not-being, and eſſentially capable of either. As Matter would have of it-ſelf remained at reſt to all Eternity, if it had not been extrinſi-

cally moved; ſo Creatures would of themſelves never have exiſted, if they had not been brought into Being by the Divine Power. As Matter, being put into Motion, continues no longer to move, than the external Force impells it, but, as ſoon as that is taken off, returns again to Reſt; ſo a Creature, having once been put into Being, continues no longer therein, than the creating Power (if I may ſo call it) of God retains it; but, when that is removed, returns to its original Non-exiſtence. As it is ſufficient, in order to ſtop a piece of Matter in Motion and reduce it to Reſt, to ceaſe to impell it, or withdraw the moving Force; ſo to annihilate any Creature or put an End to its Exiſtence, nothing more is requiſite, than to with-hold that Creative Act which gives it Being. As the *Vis Inertiæ*, or Reſt of Matter, is no *poſitive Power*, *Tendency* or *Endeavour* to Reſt, which *reſiſts* the moving Force; but a mere *Inability* to move of it-ſelf without being impreſſed by an Extrinſic Force;

Force; ſo the Inability of Creatures to ſubſiſt of themſelves, is a mere *Vis Inertiæ*, or Negative Power; implying Nothing of a Poſitive Tendency to Annihilation. For a Creature upheld in Being by the Divine Power, is not like a piece of Matter which is moved towards the right Hand, though at the ſame time it endeavours to move by a Counter-force towards the left; but like a piece of Matter, which, being at reſt in a vacuous Space, is mov'd a certain way, without having any Preſſure to a contrary Motion.

This wonderful Analogy of Motion and Reſt in Matter, with the Exiſtence and Non-exiſtence of Creatures, is, in my Mind, very worthy to be obſerv'd: And therefore, in order to make it ſtill more clear and evident; let us ſuppoſe (*A*), a Globe of Matter hanging at perfect reſt in a vacuous Space. To this Globe let a moving Force (*M*) be apply'd, impelling it

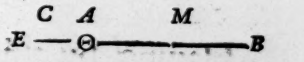


towards (*E.*) in the infinite Line (*AE*). Then the Globe may repreſent a Creature; the Motion of it, its Exiſtence; the moving Force, the Creative Power of God giving it Exiſtence; the infinite Line wherein it moves, Eternity or infinite Duration. Now it is evident that, as if the moving Force (*M*) had not impell'd the Globe (*A*), it wou'd not have begun to move; ſo ſince even now it is in Motion, it does not move of it ſelf, but only by Virtue of the continual Impulſe of (*M*), that if That Moving Power were taken away, it wou'd immediately ſtop. Juſt ſo a Creature, being in a State of Non-exiſtence, not only cannot begin to Be of it ſelf, without the Action of the Divine Omnipotence; but even, while it is in Being, ſubſiſts purely by Virtue of the ſame Action continuing to give it Exiſtence; and wou'd immediately ſtop, or ceaſe to go forward in Exiſtence, if that ſhou'd be taken away from it. But as the Globe (*A*) does not at all

reſiſt

reſiſt the moving Force (*M*), but moves with a Celerity exactly proportion'd to the Quantity of it; ſo neither has a Creature any manner of *Reſitency* or *Counter-preſſure* to the Action of God, which gives it Being: It has only a pure *Inability* to Be of it-ſelf, correſponding to the Inability which the Globe (*A*) has, to continue to move towards (*E*), after the moving Force (*M*) ceaſes to impell it.

But if we ſuppoſe (*C*) to be a moving Power, as well as (*M*), protruding the Globe a contrary way towards (*B*), but with a leſs Force; then the Globe will ſtill move towards (*E*), though not ſo faſt as before, but with an ineffectual Tendency towards (*B*), inſomuch that if the greater Force (*M*) were taken away, it would immediately move towards (*B*). Now ſuch a kind of *Poſitive Tendency* or *Endeavour* to Not-being as might anſwer to this, is what the Biſhop ſeems to mean, when he ſays; *But as this wou'd make the*



Preſervation of the World to be a continued Violence *to a Natural Tendency that is in all things; ſo there is no more reaſon to imagine that Beings have a* Tendency *to Annihilation, than that Nothing had a Tendency to Creation. It is abſurd to think that any thing can have a Tendency to that which is eſſentially oppoſite to it-ſelf, and is deſtructive of it.* Now let ſuch a Poſitive Tendency in Creatures to Not-being, be never ſo abſurd, I am not at all concern'd in it; for, *ſuch* I do not hold, nor does it follow from any thing I maintain; and conſequently the Objection does not reach me, who only aſſert an *Inability* in all Created Beings to ſubſiſt of themſelves.

Having by this time, I hope, given a ſufficient Anſwer to the Biſhop of *Sarum*'s Objections, I will conclude this Point with a Paſſage out of Mr. *Cowley*'s *Davideis*, which contains a handſom Repreſentation of the Notion I have been defending. It is in his Deſcription of Hea-

Heaven, where I remember he has theſe Lines;

There thou thy ſelf doſt in full Preſence ſhow,
Not abſent from theſe meaner Worlds below;
No, if thou wert, the Elements League wou'd ceaſe,
And all thy Creatures break thy Nature's Peace.
The Sun would ſtop his Courſe, or gallop back,
The Stars drop out, the Poles themſelves wou'd crack:
Earth's ſtrong Foundations wou'd be torn in twain,
And this vaſt Work all ravel out again
To its firſt Nothing; for his Spirit contains
The well-knit Maſs; from Him each Creature gains
Being and Motion, which he ſtill beſtows;
From Him th' Effect of our weak Action flows.

Tho' your elegant Account of the beautiful Pictures You ſaw at *T.* has rais'd in me a high Idea of the maſterly Hands that drew thoſe breathing Shadows; yet I fancy You have Your ſelf drawn as fine a one as any of them, in your lively De-

ſcription of the charming Scene by the River-ſide. Without Flattery, I am extremely pleas'd with it, and have lodg'd it in my Memory among thoſe favourite Paſſages which I frequently entertain my Imagination with reviewing. I am,

Dear SIR,

Your ſincere humble Servant,

H. NEEDLER.

To Mr. *D.*

Portſmouth, *Auguſt* 6, 1711.

Dear SIR,

HAving in my former Letters eſtabliſh'd the Doctrine of the continual Dependence of all things upon God, I intend now to proceed, in order to give a complete Idea of Divine Providence ſo far as it relates to the Government of the Natural World, to prove likewiſe that 'tis God only, who is the True Author of all

all the Changes that happen in Nature; or that all thoſe regular Effects, which we obſerve to be produced therein, ought to be immediately attributed to him, as the true *Anima Mundi* or *Active Principle* of Nature; which Propoſition I will not pretend to prove *abſolutely*, or deduce regularly from firſt and ſelf-evident Principles, (for that wou'd exceed the Bounds of a ſhort Epiſtle), but from ſuch Premiſes as are in themſelves reaſonable, and have been well prov'd by others, and which I am ſatisfy'd you will readily allow.

Firſt then I ſuppoſe, That God is an All-perfect Being, or a Being of ſuch ſuperlative Excellency and Perfection, that 'tis impoſſible to conceive any thing more perfect; from hence I deduce this Conſequence, that the Power of God is nothing really different from the Efficacy of his Will; for I think it cannot reaſonably be deny'd, that a Being who by the bare Efficacy of his Will produces whatſoever he wills, ſo that he needs uſe no Means to accompliſh his Deſires, is more perfect than

than one who is forced to execute his Will by an Act diſtinct from that Will; and which therefore he uſes as a means to accompliſh it. Can there be any Doubt, which is the moſt Excellent Being, he whoſe Will is neceſſarily ſelf-efficacious and ſufficient to create whatever he wills, or he who after he has will'd a thing, muſt put forth another Act to produce it? To this I may add, that *Moſes* in his Hiſtory of the Creation repreſents God as giving Being to things by the pure Force and Efficacy of his Almighty *Fiat* or Will. *And God ſaid, Let there be Light; and there was Light.* Which Words ſeem fairly to intimate, that Light not only immediately *follow'd*, but was likewiſe *produced* by the Divine Will as its proper Cauſe. But if God's Power be Nothing really diſtinct from his Will, 'tis evident that he cannot communicate any Portion of it to any other Being otherwiſe than by willing, that what ſuch an intelligent Creature ſhall will, ſhall come to paſs. But then in ſuch a Caſe

it

it is plain, that 'tis the Divine Will, and not the Will of That intelligent Being, which is the true Phyſical Cauſe of the enſuing Effect. If this Reaſoning be good, it follows by a neceſſary Conſequence, that God is the true Author of all that is done in Nature; and that Creatures neither Do, nor can Do any thing.

Secondly, Let us conſider what it is that is done in the Natural World, and try if we can diſcover from the Nature of the Actions, who is the true Agent. All the Actions that we obſerve in the World are of two Kinds; they are either thoſe whereby Bodies are mov'd, or thoſe by which Spirits are affected with various Senſations. Now I will endeavour to prove, that Matter has not the Power of Motion, nor of producing Senſations in Spirits; and that no Being but God is ſufficiently qualified to do thoſe things, in ſuch manner as they are actually perform'd in the World.

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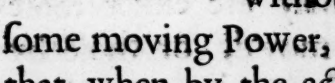
In order to prove the firſt, I ſhall only ſuppoſe, that Matter cannot move of it ſelf, or without the Action of ſome external Force giving it Motion. This is what is in ſome ſort confirm'd by Experience, for it wou'd certainly be thought a Prodigy, to ſee a Body move of it ſelf, without any known Cauſe Viſible or Inviſible. And it is upon this Principle, this *Vis Inertiæ* of Matter, that all the Demonſtrations in Mechanics are founded. Now from hence it clearly follows, that a Body, as (A), cannot begin of it ſelf to move towards (B), without the Impulſe of ſome moving Power, as (M); and likewiſe that when by the action of (M) upon it, it has begun to move towards (B), it can continue that Motion no longer than (M) continues to impell it. For if we ſuppoſe (A) to be mov'd to (C) by the Force of (M); and that when it arrives at (C), the moving Power ceaſes to act upon it; and yet that *afterwards* it

Scheme I.

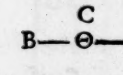


it moves as far as (T); 'tis plain that the Body (A) moves from (C) to (T) *of it ſelf*, without being impell'd by any *external Force*. This Argument is ſo clear and cogent, that I can ſcarce forbear ſetting the Mathematical Mark upon it, and ſtamping it with a Q. E. D. Yet this is a Truth, which Philoſophers are generally ſo little aware of, that tho' they cannot but acknowledge the Neceſſity of a firſt Mover unmov'd, to cauſe Matter to *begin* to move; of ſome Immaterial Being to give the *firſt Turn* (as it were) to Nature's Wheel; yet they fancy that when 'tis once ſet a going, it can *continue* to move well enough *of it ſelf*, by Bodies communicating their Motion ſucceſſively to one another as they meet. So that they fall into the ſame Error in relation to the Motion of Matter, as they do in regard to the Exiſtence of Creatures; falſely imagining, that tho' the one cannot begin to move, nor the others to exiſt of themſelves, yet that, when they have been once put into Motion and Exiſtence, they

they can continue therein without any external Aid.

Perhaps it may be ſaid, that tho' it muſt be granted that Bodies cannot move of themſelves, yet nothing hinders but that they may move one another, ſo that a Body, as (A), (ſee the 2d Scheme), being mov'd by ſome Immaterial Agent towards (B), and meeting another, as (C) in its way, may carry that along with it. I anſwer, That tho' we ſhou'd allow in this Caſe that (A) does really move (C), yet it will be able to move it no longer than while it actually touches it; and ſo thruſts it forward; and even *that* no longer than while it ſelf is mov'd by the Immaterial Force. But after all, (A) is not the real Power which moves (C). 'Tis true indeed, that if the Immaterial Mover will have (A) proceed in a Right Line towards (B) after it is arriv'd at (C), he muſt move (C) with it; becauſe (C) is impenetrable, and is now join'd to (A), and become

Scheme II.



come as it were, one Body with it. So that the moving Body (A), meeting with (C), is the *Occaſion* indeed of its Motion, but nevertheleſs 'tis the Immaterial Force, that *truly moves* both theſe Bodies now join'd together.

But if Bodies cannot move themſelves, nor one another, much leſs can they raiſe Senſations in Spirits. Our Senſations are excited by Bodies ſtriking upon the Organs of our Senſes, and moving them. Experience teaches us this. Now tho' we ſhou'd allow, that the Soul was ſomething ſolid, and ſo capable of being impell'd by Bodies; and that Bodies have power to move it; yet Mr. *Hobbs*'s Maxim, I think, cannot be denied; *Motus nihil generat præter motum*; And ſo they wou'd not be able, (even upon theſe extravagant Suppoſitions,) to raiſe one Senſation in the Soul. Much leſs will they be able to do it, if we conſider the Soul as a Being which has no Solidity; and Matter as a Being, which has no *action* nor power of moving any thing.

Thus Matter being ſhewn to be utterly unqualified to be the Author of what paſſes in Nature, there remain only created Intelligent Beings to be conſider'd: Unleſs it ſhou'd be imagin'd, that ſome Immaterial and Active, tho' *Unintelligent* Being may actuate Nature. But an Unintelligent Being, however Active and Immaterial, (ſuppoſing ſuch a *Chimæra* poſſible,) cou'd never be qualified to govern Nature, becauſe, being *Unintelligent*, it wou'd not be capable of receiving any Laws, nor of regulating it ſelf by them, any more than Matter it ſelf: From ſuch a blind Power as this, the World might more reaſonably expect Ruin and Confuſion, than a wiſe and regular Government. If it ſhou'd be ſuppoſed, that ſome finite Intelligence preſides over the Motions of Nature, and the Senſations of inferior Spirits; the Abſurdity of ſuch Suppoſition will appear by conſidering how many Millions of Bodies are mov'd, and Spirits touch'd with various Senſations, at the ſame Inſtant; and all

all according to certain fixt and ſtated Laws, which are conſtantly obſerv'd with an invariable Exactneſs. Now who but God himſelf can attend to ſuch a Multitude of things at the ſame time, without Diſtraction and Confuſion? But if it ſhou'd be thought, that the Government of Nature may be divided between a great Number of Intelligences, each of which has his diſtinct Province aſſign'd him; the Task indeed will be ſo much the eaſier to every Individual; but ſtill, methinks, a poor Spirit will have a hard time of it, to be made an Eternal Drudge, to wheel round an Orb, or conſtantly attend a Man, in order to affect him with proper Senſations, according as his Body ſhall be acted upon by thoſe about him. If I believ'd that created Spirits were the Authors of Natural Effects, I ſhou'd certainly fancy they were *Evil Spirits*, and doom'd to this Eternal Slavery, as a Puniſhment for their Sins. For I ſuppoſe Good Spirits to be employed in the Contemplation and Fruition of the Sove-

reign Being. But why ſhou'd we imagine, after all, any created Spirits, whether Good or Bad, to govern Nature; ſince God is capable of doing it himſelf without their Aſſiſtance; and that without any Fatigue and Diſtraction, or the leaſt Diminution of his Eaſe and Happineſs? Or how can we think that God, who is too wiſe to do any thing in vain, has appointed ſo many ſubordinate Agents and Inſtruments to do That, which his own *Will* was of *it ſelf* ſufficient to have effected. In my Mind, this one Conſideration is enough to refute the Notion of ſecond Cauſes, that they are *needleſs*; and that whatever is aſcrib'd to them, might as well have been done, without them, by the bare Efficacy of the Divine Will; for why ſhou'd we ſuppoſe God to make uſe of ſuch Means and Inſtruments to compaſs his End, as he has no *Occaſion* for? The Truth is, the Notions of ſubordinate Agents and ſecond Cauſes have taken their Riſe, from Mens ſecretly aſcribing to God the Imperfecti-

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ons of created Beings; and ſo fancying either that it was beneath his Grandeur and Majeſty, to do every thing in Nature himſelf, or elſe that he cou'd not, without *Care and Trouble*, attend to ſuch an infinite Variety of Things. Upon which grounds, they have repreſented God like ſome Luxurious Monarch, who commits the Government of his Kingdom to the Care of his Miniſters, whilſt he indulges himſelf in his Eaſe and Pleaſures. 'Tis very true, the Government of the Natural World is a Work ſo vaſt and various, that it muſt needs diſtract and confound any Capacity leſs than Infinite. But what Trouble, what Diſtraction, can the Government of ten thouſand Worlds give him, who has always before him, in One Eternal View, all things Paſt, Preſent and Future; and, in order to have any thing done, needs only Will that it ſhall be done.

As for the other Objection, that it better befits the Grandeur and Majeſty of the Deity to govern Nature by ſubordinate Miniſters and Inſtruments, than to

do it immediately himſelf; You know what Anſwer Mr. *Le Clerc* has given to it in his * *Bibliotheque Choiſie*; which therefore I will not here repeat.

* ‘ The Fear we may poſſibly entertain, leſt Providence ‘ ſhould be too much encumber'd, if we ſhou'd ſuppoſe it ‘ to intervene immediately in every thing, will vaniſh, when ‘ we conſider; That God is an Infinite Being, who can do ‘ every thing with Eaſe, and takes no more Pains in performing an Infinity of Actions at once, than in remaining altogether Unactive. We are not to meaſure Him by ‘ our Weakneſs; for we are Finite; and therefore frighten'd ‘ at the Proſpect of a great Number of Employments at the ‘ ſame Time. Nor are we to conſider Him as a King, who ‘ ſeems to be honour'd by a Multitude of Servants, but, in Reality, only employs them, becauſe he cannot be every where ‘ in Perſon, and attend at once to great and leſſer Matters: ‘ So that what ſeems, in One Light, to give a high Idea of ‘ his Power, is indeed, in Another, no more than a lively ‘ Proof of his Weakneſs. Nay, who can doubt, but that ‘ a King wou'd be more reſpected, and even honour'd by ‘ his Subjects as a kind of Deity, if he had no Occaſion ‘ for any Miniſters or Servants; and cou'd do every thing ‘ himſelf, without Perplexity and Trouble? Nor ought we ‘ to think, it is more worthy of God, to form the Body of ‘ an Elephant, than that of a Fly or Hand-worm. The ‘ Bulk of the Body contributes Nothing to the Excellence ‘ of the Work; and there appears no leſs Wiſdom and ‘ Power in the Formation of a ſmall, than of a large Creature.

‘ *Cicero*, indeed, has ridiculed this laſt Thought, in the ‘ 6th Book of his *Academical Enquiries*, Chap. 38; where ‘ he thus addreſſes himſelf to the *Stoicks:* “ You maintain, “ that theſe Creatures (*Serpents*) cou'd not have been made “ with ſo much Beauty and Elegance, without the Skill “ of a Divine Artificer; whoſe Majeſty You degrade even “ to the Forming of Bees and Ants: So that there ſeems “ to have been a *Myrmecides* even among the Gods, *the* “ *Maker of things in Epitome. Negatis hæc tam politè,*

“ *támque*

Now ſince, excepting theſe two Objections, (which are plainly grounded upon our own falſe Ideas of God,) I know nothing, that can with any colour of Reaſon be objected againſt the Notion I have been maintaining; and ſo many good and ſolid Reaſons may be urg'd for it, (as appears by the little Specimen I have given,) I think there remains no room to doubt, which ſide of the Queſtion ought to be embraced.

I thank you for your judicious Reflections on *Engliſh* Comedies; and am ſorry to ſee the Charge againſt them, ſo well prov'd in every Article. The Poiſon of ſuch Writings is the more dangerous, becauſe it is varniſh'd with Wit and Eloquence, which makes it the more eaſily ſwallow'd by unwary Readers.

" *ſàmque ſubtiliter effici potuiſſe, ſine divina aliqua ſolertia;*
" *cujus quidem vos majeſtatem deducitis uſque ad apium,*
" *formicarúmque perfectionem; ut etiam inter Deos Myr-*
" *mecides aliquis minutorum fabricator fuiſſe videatur.*"
' But this is mere Declamation. The Orators and Philo-
' ſophers are full of ſuch-like Reaſonings, where a ſligh
' Probability ſupplies the Place of Evidence.'
Le Clerc's Bibliotheque Choiſie, Tome 2d. p. 87, *&c.*

But I ſuppoſe Care will be taken, in the *Bill for regulating the Preſs*, to reform theſe Abuſes; for *Lewdneſs* and *Blaſphemy* will not ſurely be allow'd better Quarter, than *Hereſy* and *Heterodoxy*. I am,

Dear SIR,

Yours Sincerely,

H. NEEDLER.

To Mr. *D.*

Portſmouth, *Auguſt* 16, 1711.

Dear SIR,

IT is a common Obſervation, that Perſons of a melancholy Diſpoſition love Solitude. Of the Truth of this, I think, I my ſelf am an Inſtance; for as I am of *that* Complexion, ſo I have a great Affection for Self-Society; and tho' I muſt acknowledge, that a Mixture of Solitude and Converſation is moſt agreeable, and that there are ſome Few in the World, of whoſe Company I cou'd never be tir'd, yet

yet if I were under ſo unhappy a *Dilemma*, as to be obliged either to live in perpetual Solitude, or in the conſtant Society of ſome ſort of Perſons, I ſhou'd chuſe the former as the leſs Evil of the Two. For as there is ſcarce any Pleaſure preferable to that of agreeable Converſation, ſo there is hardly any thing more irkſom, than to be always tied to the Company of ſuch, as are of a Diſpoſition unſuitable to ones own.

In compliance with this Humour and my Love of the Country, I frequently walk out by my ſelf into the Fields adjoining to this Town, 'till I loſe my ſelf in ſome unfrequented Retirement, where a thouſand entertaining Ideas are revived in my Mind, which before lay buried under a heap of Buſineſs and Impertinences. Every Herb, every Flower, or little Inſect that I meet with, affords me matter of delightful Speculation and Amuſement, whilſt I admire the Beauty and Gaiety of their Colours, or the almoſt infinite Variety of their Forms. At ſuch

a time, my Thoughts naturally take a Solemn and Religious Turn. I conſider the whole Scene of Nature as the Work of a Supreme Being; Every Part of which abounds with manifeſt Proofs and Inſtances of the Wiſdom, Power and Goodneſs of its Maker.

'Twas in ſuch Circumſtances and ſuch a Diſpoſition of Mind as this, that I wrote the following Copy of Verſes, as I ſat under a Tree in a Meadow; on which I leave you to beſtow what Title You ſhall think fit.

What Man, who ſees this glorious Azure Sky,
(The boundleſs Extent of whoſe ample Cope
Seems to graſp all things in its wide Embrace;)
This radiant Sun, who from his Station high
Sheds Vital Heat and Vigour thro' the World,
And gilds each Object with his lucid Beams;
Then downward turns his Eye, and views around
This lovely Landskip, theſe enamell'd Meads,
That with a thouſand various Beauties ſmile;

Theſe

These neighb'ring Fields with Golden Harveſt
crown'd,
Whoſe copious Store rewards the Tiller's Care
Laborious, with a hundred-fold Increaſe;
And hears theſe Birds their ſoft enchanting
Notes
Melodious ſing, and fill with Harmony
This ſhady Solitude, can yet demand,
What Cauſe produce'd this Univerſal Frame?
For what but an Eternal Mind, endu'd
With utmoſt Reach of Wiſdom exquiſite,
" In Goodneſs and in Power præeminent,
Cou'd raiſe this ſtately Pile; and, all its Parts,
So viſibly, in Order due, diſpoſe;
Cou'd ſpread this ſpacious Canopy, adorn'd
With num'rous glowing Stars, that ſeem to ſhine
With emulating Luſtre, and diſplay
Their bright Nocturnal Scene; cou'd cloth
this Earth
With Graſs; with Foreſt crown the Moun-
tain-tops;
With Rivers grand, and murm'ring Rivulets,
Refreſh the thirſty Fields; that ſo the Whole
To Man a Habitation might afford

Commo-

Commodious and Delightful? How Ingrate,
And Blind the Atheiſt! who denies the Pow'r
Indulgent, that has made him, and beſtow'd
So many Bleſſings on him undeſerv'd!
'Tis Prejudice, (he crys,) that makes you think
The Notion of a Deity Supreme,
So plain and obvious; which to thoſe, who dare
Their Reaſon freely uſe, obſcure appears.
Suppoſe we then a perfect Man, mature
In all his Faculties, with Judgment ſtrong,
To ſtart forth into Being, and ſurvey
This ample Scene of Nature's various Works,
The Sky and Earth with all their Furniture,
And fair Inhabitants: And who can doubt
That He, by Native Force of Reaſon taught,
Wou'd ſoon confeſs ſome mighty Pow'r Divine,
Munificent and Wiſe, had fram'd the Whole;
Who then, by Education's Biaſs falſe
And Prejudice, cou'd never be miſ-led.
How can the Atheiſt, whilſt Himſelf he views,
Peruſing Limb by Limb, perſiſt to ask
Convincing Evidence to prove a God?
Who form'd his Body? By what artful Hand
Was the nice Fabrick made? Who place'd the

Bones *In*

In ſuch a well-knit Frame, and with ſuch Skill
And Symmetry contriv'd? Who bade the Blood
Forth-iſſue from the Fountain of the Heart,
And thence thro' all th' Arterial Roads diffuſe
Its purple Current; then return its Streams,
And to its Source with winding Tide convey?
Who ſpun the fibrous Threads that form the
Nerves,
And taught 'em, from their Brainy Origin,
Thro' ev'ry Limb t'extend their Branches long?
Who form'd the curious Organ of the Eye,
And cloth'd it with its various Tunicles,
Of Texture exquiſite; with Chryſtal Juice
Supply'd it, to tranſmit the Rays of Light,
Then place'd it in its Station eminent,
Well fence'd and guarded, as a Centinel
To watch abroad, and advertiſe the Soul
Of things without, and needful Caution give?
Whence came the Active and Sagacious
Mind,
Self-conſcious, and with Faculties endu'd
Of Underſtanding, Will and Memory,
And Reaſon to diſtinguiſh True from Falſe?
Who

Who join'd it to the Body, and of Both
Made up one perfect Being, gave it Pow'r
To move the Limbs, and bade the brawny Arm
Obey its Will? What but an Infinite,
Almighty God, ſupremely Wiſe and Good,
Could all theſe great and beauteous Works
produce?

Your Reflections on the Lottery are no leſs rational than pious. It is certainly a great Inſtance of Folly as well as Impiety, to think we know better than God what is for our Good, and what Circumſtances of Life will make us moſt happy; which yet they ſeem to me to do in effect, who are reſtleſs and unſatisfied in their preſent Condition, and impatiently deſirous of a Change. A wiſe Man, when he thinks ſuch a thing wou'd be for his Advantage, *deſires* it indeed, but with no great *Earneſtneſs*, becauſe he is not certain it wou'd prove ſo in the Event; and if he does not obtain it, he reſts contented with this Thought, that ſince

ſince God did not think fit to allow it, it wou'd not have been really for his Benefit to have had it. How Miſerable ſhou'd we often be, if God ſhou'd grant our Wiſhes, and hearken to our fooliſh Prayers? If the young Spendthrift were Maſter of that Eſtate, which he ſo ardently deſires, how ſoon wou'd he deſtroy himſelf by his Debaucheries and Intemperance? Doubtleſs, God often puniſhes us for our Murmurings and Diſcontents, as he did the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs, by gratifying our importunate Deſires, in giving us thoſe things, which if we had walk'd humbly before him, with a patient Reſignation to his good Providence, he wou'd out of mere Mercy and Compaſſion have with-held from us. In ſhort it is certain, that we are both too dim-ſighted and ignorant to chuſe aright, and too weak and impotent to obtain our Choice. It behoves us therefore to ſecure *his* Favour and Friendſhip, by an humble Obſervation of his Laws and Reliance on his Providence, who both *knows* how

how to make us happy, and *is able* effectually to perform it. I am,

Dear SIR,

Your moſt affectionate
humble Servant,
H. NEEDLER.

To Mr. *D.*

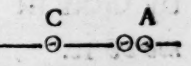
Portſmouth, *September* 2, 1711.

Dear SIR,

I Have conſider'd Mr. *H*——*s*'s Objections, againſt what I advanced concerning Motion.

As to the firſt, it contains more than is warranted by *Experience*, from whence it is drawn; for *that* only teaches us, that when a Body at reſt is ſtruck by one in Motion, the ſtricken Body, immediately after the Blow, begins to fly from the Striker. But it does not teach us, that the ſtriking Body is the *true Cauſe* of that Motion, which the Body ſtruck

ſtruck receives upon Occaſion of its Impulſe. Now *Reaſon* teaches us, that it cannot poſſibly be the Cauſe of it. For, Suppoſe that (C), having been ſtruck by (A), is now moving towards (B), with the Interval (CA) between it and (A); 'tis certain that (C) moves by Virtue of a moving Force, which, at this very *Inſtant* of its preſent Motion, is *actually* apply'd to it; and not by Virtue of any former Impulſe which it receiv'd from (A). For (I think) I have demonſtrated (upon Suppoſition of Matter's being inactive, and uncapable of moving it ſelf,) that no Body, having been put into Motion, will continue to move one Moment longer, than the Action of the moving Power is *actually* apply'd to it. But (A) cannot at preſent exert any Force or Action upon (C) to move it, becauſe of its Diſtance from it. It follows therefore, that the Motion of (C) is only *occaſion'd* by its having been ſtruck by (A); and that (A) is not the *True Cauſe* of its Motion: Which was to be prov'd. Thus when a



Bowl ſtrikes the Jack, the Blow only *occaſions* the Jack to be mov'd, by Virtue of the *general Laws of Motion*, eſtabliſh'd by God in the World; but does not *truly move* it.

As to the other Argument which Mr. *H------s* objects to; I muſt own, I laid too much Streſs upon it, in ſaying, that it was ſufficient of it ſelf to decide the Controverſy; for tho' it be certainly true, that God can do Nothing in vain; yet, upon ſecond Thoughts, I believe it wou'd ſavour of too much Preſumption peremptorily to affirm, that ſecond Cauſes wou'd be in vain, becauſe we do not comprehend what Uſe they may be of; ſince God might ordain them for ſecret Purpoſes unknown to us. But however, tho' this Argument ſhou'd be allow'd to be of little Weight, the Concluſion does not ſo much reſt upon it, as to fall, if it be taken away. Thoſe which remain, I doubt not, will be ſufficient to ſupport its Weight.

What

What You offer, I think, is ſufficiently confuted in my Anſwer to Mr. *H---s*'s firſt Objection; for there I have ſhewn, that ſuch a ſucceſſive Communication of Motion, without the continual Concurrence of any Immaterial Power, is impoſſible. Beſides, your Hypotheſis, tho' granted to be poſſible, cou'd not account for the conſtant Motion of thoſe Bodies, which are not impell'd by any others; ſuch are all the Planets, which Sir *Iſaac Newton* has ſhewn to perform their Revolutions in an almoſt perfect *Vacuum*; and conſequently do not owe their Motions to the Impulſe of External Bodies. The prevailing Opinion concerning theſe is, that God, in the Beginning, impreſs'd upon them ſuch a Quantity of Projectile Motion, as was ſufficient, without his farther Concurrence, to carry them round in their Orbs for ever; according to that of Sir *Richard Blackmore*,

He weigh'd, and put them off with ſuch a Force,
As might maintain an Everlaſting Courſe.

But that this is falſe, appears plainly from

the Propoſition prov'd in my Letter of *Auguſt* the 6th, *viz.* That no Body, having been once put into Motion, can continue therein any longer, than the moving Power continues to act upon it. For from hence it follows, that all the Planets owe their Motions to the Conſtant and Never-ceaſing Action of God, or at leaſt of ſome Immaterial Being; which being remov'd but for one Moment, they wou'd immediately ſtop their Courſes. So litterally true are the Words in which the *Platonic* Poet, *Boethius*, addreſſes himſelf to God;

Great Ruler of the glorious Worlds above,
Who ſeated high on thy Eternal Throne,
Doſt Heav'n around in rapid Courſes move,
And mak'ſt the Stars thy vaſt Dominion own! &c.

If the firſt Part of your Objection be anſwer'd, the ſecond falls of Courſe. For if it was impoſſible ſo to conſtitute Nature, as You imagine, the not doing it cannot argue any Defect of Wiſdom or any

any other Perfection in God. However, I cannot let paſs this Part of your Objection, without obſerving one Paſſage in it. "So, (ſay You,) it ſhou'd ſeem to imply more Wiſdom in the adorable Creator of the World, to govern it by "*fixt* and *ſtated Laws*; or by the "Miniſtration of ſome ſubordinate A-"gents; than to be oblig'd immediately to intervene Himſelf, in every trifling Occurrence and inconſiderable E-"vent." Now here you unwarily make a Suppoſition, that is perfectly coincident with my Hypotheſis, which nevertheleſs you oppoſe thereto. For what I contend for, is, That God does govern the World by *fixt* and *ſtated Laws*; nor do I ſuppoſe him to *intervene* in every *trifling Occurrence* and *inconſiderable Event*; but to act, *like himſelf*, in a *uniform* and *conſtant* Manner, and to do all *Particular things*, only in *Conſequence* of thoſe *General Laws*, which his Wiſdom has eſtabliſh'd. Thus when he moves any Piece of Matter, upon its being ſtruck by another in Motion,

or when he affects a Man with the Senſation of Pain, upon his Body's being prick'd with a Needle; He does not do theſe things by a *particular Will*, having reſpect alone to that *ſingle Action*; but only in *Conſequence* of thoſe *General Laws*, or *Decrees*, which he has eſtabliſh'd, concerning the Communication of Motion, and the Union of the Soul and Body.

As to my manner of Living here, (which you deſire an Account of), you may gueſs it is not very pleaſant, both becauſe I am ſo much taken up with Buſineſs, that I have little Time to follow my Studies; and becauſe I have none but Strangers to converſe with. Perhaps you will anſwer, that they ought not to be Strangers to me now; but I muſt own, that I am of ſo reſerv'd a Temper, that I cannot be preſently acquainted with any body. Beſides, I put a great deal of Difference between an Acquaintance and a Friend. However I am pretty intimate with Mr. *C*, who has lent me two Books, *viz.* Seigneur *Montaign*'s *Eſſays*, and Mr. *Hobbs*'s *Tripos*.

Tripos. I fancy, you will ſay, he has made an excellent Choice. But I aſſure you, 'twas pure chance; for he knows no more what is contain'd in them, than he does what is contain'd in the Books of Deſtiny.

As for Seigneur *Montaigne*; I find by what I have read in him, that the chief Deſign of his *Eſſays* is to depreciate the Dignity of human Nature, and to render Man as vile and contemptible a Being as poſſible. For which end he very ſtrenuouſly maintains the Cauſe of *Scepticiſm*, heaping up all the Arguments and Authorities that can be thought of, to perſuade us we know Nothing, and that all things are altogether uncertain. He is extremely diſguſted at *Cicero*, for a Paſſage in his ſecond Book *De Naturâ Deorum*, C. LIII. *Quorum igitur cauſa quis dixerit effectum eſſe Mundum? Eorum ſcilicet animantium, quæ ratione utuntur: hi ſunt Dii, & homines: quibus profectò nihil eſt melius. We can never ſufficiently decry* (ſays he,) *the Impudence of*

this Conjunction. But, wretched Creature! what has he in himself worthy of such an Advantage? Here I muſt needs take *Cicero*'s part; for I cannot ſee any thing in this Quotation either Falſe or Arrogant. He does not affirm that the Univerſe was made *entirely* for the ſake of Man; but only, (what is plainly true,) that the World was made for him and the Gods, that is, ſuperior Intelligences. The Earth was certainly deſign'd, in a particular manner, for the Service of Man. And tho' it be very probable, that the fix'd Stars and Planets were intended principally for the Uſe and Habitation of other intelligent Beings, yet even Theſe contribute ſomething to the Service and Delight of Man, and may truly be ſaid to have been made *partly*, tho' not *ſolely* for his Uſe. The Moon, 'tis likely, may afford a Habitation to ſome unknown Race of Animals. But that is not her *only* Uſe; ſhe ſerves likewiſe to enlighten the Earth with her reflected Splendour. The Earth, in like manner, gratefully

fully returns her Courteſy, ſerving not only for an Abode to Man, but as a Moon to the *Lunar* World. How do thoſe glorious Spangles of the Sky, the fix'd Stars, delight our Eyes with their radiant Luſtre! How do they declare to us the Glory of God! How elevate our Thoughts to the Contemplation of their adorable Creator! Theſe certainly are Services, and very great ones too. So that, (whatever Seigneur *Montaigne* may think of it,) *Cicero* has not in this Paſſage arrogated to Man any vain and imaginary Prerogatives, but only recogniz'd the Bounty and Goodneſs of his Maker to him. He gives this Character of your admired *Cicero*: *As to* Cicero, *I am of the common Opinion, that, Learning excepted, he had no great Parts. He was a good Citizen, of an affable Nature, (as all fat heavy Men, ſuch as he was, uſually are,) but given to Eaſe, and had a mighty Share of Vanity and Ambition.* To conclude; If you wou'd ſee a juſt Character of this Author, I refer you to his Countryman, Monſieur

ſieur *Malebranche*; who, in his *Search after Truth*, Book 2. Chap. v. has made ſome very judicious Reflections upon him. I am,

Dear SIR,

Your affectionate

humble Servant,

H. NEEDLER.

To Mr. *H.*

Portſmouth, *October* 1, 1711.

I Believe, you begin to think, that I mean to expreſs my Reſentment of your long Silence by my own; or that I obſerve Punctilios, like the Ladies. But I aſſure you, Experience has ſo well convinced me of the Difficulty of getting Time, in the midſt of Buſineſs, to write a Letter worth Reading, that I can eaſily excuſe your Delay, on this moſt equitable Condition, that you will admit of the ſame Excuſe

cuſe for mine. Buſineſs confines the Soul (as it were,) in a Magick Circle; it makes it move round in a Ring, ſtill beating the ſame dull Path; without ſuffering it to entertain it ſelf with the Contemplation of any thing New or Improving. 'Tis, in ſhort, the Fetters and Shackles of the Mind; it deprives even Thought of its Native Freedom; and ought ſo much rather to be ſhun'd than Bodily Confinement, as the Liberty of the Soul is preferable to that of the Body. It may indeed well be ſaid to impriſon the Mind; for as Corporal Impriſonment confines the Body to move in One Determinate Place, ſo Buſineſs confines the Soul to think of One Particular Subject.

I am not at all ambitious of a great and ſplendid Fortune; but, I muſt own, I very much deſire ſuch a Portion of Wealth, as may be ſufficient to make me Maſter of my own Time and Thoughts.

For the few Hours of Life allotted me,
Grant me, Great God, but Bread and Liberty,
I'll

I'll ask no more. If more thou'rt pleas'd to give,
I'll thankfully that Overplus receive.
If beyond this, no more be freely ſent;
I'll thank for this, and go away content.
Cowley.

Let me but enjoy my Friend and my Books, and the free Uſe of my own Thoughts, in ſome ſweet obſcure Receſs, ſome Rural Retirement; And the Ambitious may, by Me unenvied, aſcend the higheſt Pinnacles of Honour and Preferment; the Miſer may fill his Coffers brimfull with Gold; and the Voluptuary wallow in ſenſual Delights. For my Part, I have no Ambition but to be Maſter of my-ſelf; nor am I ſo deſirous to fill my Bags with Gold, as to enrich my Mind with Knowledge and Virtue; nor do I think any Pleaſures ſo valuable, as thoſe of Innocence and Tranquillity.

Antiquity has tranſmitted to us the Lives of a great many Eminent Men; among all which, I think none more to be

be envied than *Epicurus* and *Metrodorus*. Theſe were two Friends, that lived obſcurely and unknown at *Athens*, paſſing away their Time in a delicious Garden, in the Study of Philoſophy and Contemplation of Nature. I am perſuaded that the Lives of theſe Philoſophers were far more happy, than thoſe of *Alexander* the Great or *Julius Cæſar*. *They* lived at Eaſe and Secure; delighting their Minds with the Search and Contemplation of Truth: Whilſt *Theſe* underwent perpetual Fatigues and Toils of Body, reſtleſs Cares and Anxieties of Mind; and all to purchaſe a wretched Prize of Imaginary Glory. They made indeed a brave Figure, a ſplendid Appearance in the World; and, it is likely, were thought happy Men by the Crowd. But I very much queſtion, whether they were thought ſo by themſelves.

For my Part, I own, I am of ſuch an indolent unaſpiring Temper, that I ſhou'd think Fame and Renown dearly purchaſed at the Price of my Eaſe and Safety.

Safety. I mortally hate all Buſtle and Noiſe. I am for a calm and quiet Life; a Life that ſhou'd conſiſt rather in Contemplation than Motion, in Speculation than Action. I wou'd have it glide along with a ſmooth and even Pace, like a gentle Current; not rowl with impetuous Force, like a rapid Torrent.

In ſome low Vale, where limpid Rivers ſtray,
And ſportful Streams with prattling Pebbles play;
Where lofty Trees a Sylvan *Proſpect raiſe,*
Inglorious let me paſs my peaceful Days.

If I were to chuſe what manner of Life I wou'd lead, I ſhou'd divide my Time between my Study and the Field; between the Employments and Diverſions of the Country, and the Purſuit of Learning and Philoſophy. Perhaps I might ſometimes join them both together. And, in the Summer, you wou'd probably find me ſitting under a Tree with a Book in my Hand, or walking thought-

thoughtfully by myſelf in ſome pleaſant Solitude. But ſince even Paradiſe cou'd not make Man completely happy without Society, I would not ſeclude my-ſelf, like a Hermit, from all Converſation. The Company of a Friend, (I mean ſuch a Friend, as a certain Harmony and Suitableneſs of Temper and Diſpoſition has indear'd to one,) is too valuable a Bleſſing to be deſpiſed. I wou'd have You, if poſſible, or at leaſt one of Your Genius and Diſpoſition, to live with me, or very near me, and to be the Companion of my Retirement and Rural Pleaſures. I wou'd not, however, abſolutely renounce *London*. Tho' I ſhou'd not, indeed, chuſe to live there; yet I might perhaps viſit it for a Month or two in the Winter. I ſhou'd return with freſh Appetite to the Delights of Retirement and the Country, after I had exchang'd them a-while for the Entertainments of the Town. Beſides, I love Variety in every thing; and believe that a too conſtant and uninterrupted Enjoyment of any Pleaſure, wou'd make

it grow flat and inſipid. May Heaven prove ſo propitious to us, as to grant that we may, at length, live thus happily together! This is the ſincere Wiſh and Deſire of

Your affectionate Friend

and Servant,

H. NEEDLER.

REMARKS on the Argument contain'd in Mr. *Needler*'s Letter dated *July* 15, 1711.

THE *Aſſertion is*; *That if God ſhou'd ceaſe to will a Creature to exiſt, it wou'd immediately fall back into Nothing.*

The Argument is; *That the Will of God having given it Being, the withdrawing of that Will neceſſarily makes the Being to ceaſe*; *according to this Axiom*, ſublata Cauſa, tollitur Effectus.

To

To me the Queſtion ſeems not to be ſtated diſtinctly enough, but rather to be apt to betray one into a Miſtake by being capable of a double Senſe, viz. *Negatively or Poſitively. And the Argument is conſequently but imperfectly underſtood, 'till we preciſely fix the Meaning of the Poſition, which is true in one Senſe, but not in the other.*

Firſt, *If it means Poſitively, That, if God ſhould ceaſe to allow or be willing that the Creature ſhou'd exiſt, it wou'd preſently reſolve into Nothing*; *here indeed it is true*; *for this is all one as formally to Will or Reſolve it ſhall not Be*; *which muſt as certainly cauſe it not to Be, as his Willing or Reſolving that it ſhould Be, cauſed it to exiſt.*

Secondly, *If it means Negatively, That, tho' God ſhou'd not expreſsly reſolve the Creature ſhall not Be, but only ſimply forbear to exert this formal Reſolution, or Act of his Mind,* I will this to exiſt, *and ſhou'd not at the ſame time put forth any Poſitive Force or Power to reduce it to Nought, but merely give it up to ſhift for itſelf as it is*

able, and ſtand abſolutely Neuter; it wou'd immediately hereupon ceaſe to exiſt: In this Senſe it ſeems to me not true.

There are but two Ways, that I know of, for a Creature to be annihilated, viz. *By the Power of another Being put forth upon it, or by ſome Inbred Principle of Self-Diſſolution. The Firſt is the Peculiar of God alone, and can have no Place here, according to this State of the Queſtion. The Second do's no way appear; nor am I aware of any Qualities in Body or Spirit, which can furniſh a Proof of it. We obſerve indeed a great Mutability in them, or an Inclination to change from one Condition to another, but this do's not imply any Propenſity in them to fall out of Being. In Bodies without Senſe, as in Plants, we ſee an Inclination to decay, to wither and rot; but when they are decay'd, wither'd and rotted, the ſame Matter continues to exiſt under a different Modification. And in Animals, the Proof is yet ſtronger againſt the Aſſertion, for the Principle of Self-Preſervation reclaims againſt it. This is in-*

ſerted

ſerted ſo deeply, that it ſtrenuouſly oppoſes even a Mutation, when it is for the worſe; ſo far is it from inclining to Not-being. And, beſides this Principle of Mutability and Decay, I do not know any elſe that we can obſerve in Things, which bears any Reſemblance to Annihilation. But He can be no Philoſopher, who ſhall argue from One to the Other. And, ſince ſuch a Principle of Self-Diſſolution never puts forth it-ſelf, I do not underſtand how we can arrive at the Knowledge of it. And it ſeems abſurd that there ſhou'd be ſuch a one, for then there wou'd be implanted in Nature, at one and the ſame Time, two Principles directly contrary to, and ruinous of each other, and which can never be reconciled.

There is alſo a Diſtinction to be made between the Will and the Power of God. And this will farther ſhew the Argument to be Inaccurately worded. For the Will and Power of God are two different Attributes, and we have a plain Idea of each ſeparate from the other. I do not mean here that we have a clear Notion of the Will and

Power of God, ſtrictly ſpeaking, but only that we find the Idea which we are able to form of his Will, and of his Power, to bear a Diverſity, and not to be the ſame: And this Diſtinction has always been allow'd by thoſe who have written on the Divine Attributes; Indeed to expreſs the prompt and infallible Execution of his Deſigns, we ſay, God needs only Will a thing to Be, in order to make it Be. And this is a Conciſe and Majeſtic Way of Speaking, and gives us a venerable and high Notion of the perfect Will of God: But, in ſtrict Propriety, his Will is not the Efficient Cauſe, but his Power, which is exerted according to his Will, and directed by it.

Thus if God Wills or Reſolves, that a Creature, as yet Inexiſting, ſhall Be; Equally with this Act of his Will, his Power puts forth it ſelf, and the Creature accordingly comes into Being. But this is not performed by the Will ſimply, and divided from the Attribute of Power, but in Conjunction with it. Thus his Will may be ſaid to ſet his Power on acting, and in this Senſe and thus far is the Cauſe of things. In our ſelves

we

we find Volition is different from Power; for we will many things, which we are not able to accompliſh. But this being an Imperfection, is removed from God; yet it may ſerve to help us to conceive a Difference between Volition and Power. Thus then it appears, that there is not a ſimple Volition only, but a poſitive Power alſo exerted to produce a Creature, ſo that Creation is a Complex Act, and proceeds from the Will and Power of God, (not to mention here his Wiſdom and Goodneſs.) Now the Argument implys, that this ſame Complex Act is neceſſary to be always continued, in order to preſerve the Creature from relapſing into Nothing; for it aſſerts, without any Diſtinction, that the very ſame Cauſe which gave it Being, muſt never be withdrawn, i. e. *muſt perpetually exert it-ſelf without Intermiſſion. This is alſo unwarily expreſs'd, and is capable of a double Senſe.* 1. *That the very Act of Creation muſt be inceſſantly exerted: which is ſo far from being true, that it is not Senſe. For then Creation would always be an Imperfect Act, advancing indeed towards Completion, but never*

arriving at it. For ſince to create, is to bring a Being out of Nothing; when the Being is once brought out of Nothing, Creation is finiſh'd; and, whatever Act is neceſſary to preſerve it, 'tis certain it cannot be the ſame; Becauſe then, to bring into Being a Creature which is not; and to preſerve a Creature brought into Being, would be the ſame; which is falſe: And it would be, To bring out of Nothing into Being, that which, at the ſame Time, is already brought out of Nothing into Being; which is impoſſible, and not Senſe.

It remains therefore, that we conſider the Argument in another Meaning, viz. *That Not the Same, but ſome Other Act of Omnipotence is neceſſary to preſerve a Creature; becauſe a Creature being the Effect of Omnipotence, the Cauſe muſt continue in order to continue the Effect. This is built upon the Maxim,* ſublatâ Causâ, tollitur Effectus.

But if we examine into this Axiom, we ſhall find it to be of no Service in the preſent Queſtion; for it is not Univerſally true. Some Effects are fix'd and durable, even after

ter the Cauſe is periſh'd; Thus a Clock or a Houſe continue after the Workman is dead, and after all the Inſtruments employ'd in making them, are deſtroy'd. There are other Effects which depend upon the Preſence and uninterrmitted Operation of the Cauſe; the ſhining of the Sun, upon the Sun, which continues while the Sun is preſent, and no longer. Therefore before this Axiom can be brought as a Proof in this Queſtion, it muſt be ſhewn, that the Creature is of the laſt ſort of Effects. And if it is of this ſecond ſort, and cannot ſubſiſt without a continual poſitive Act of Omnipotence, it muſt be either, 1ſt, Becauſe God could not; or 2dly, Becauſe He would not make it otherwiſe.

It cannot be the firſt; and there is no Way, that I can think of, for us to know it to be the ſecond, but by Obſervation of the Properties of a created Being, or by Revelation, or by ſeeing that it manifeſtly contradicts ſome Attribute of God to have it otherwiſe. For the firſt, I refer to what is ſaid above. The ſecond I believe is not pretended. And as to the third, That a Creature ſhould

exiſt, unleſs a poſitive Act of Omnipotence is put forth to deſtroy it, does in no manner diminiſh either the Power, Wiſdom, Freedom, or Majeſty of God; becauſe it is ſtill abſolutely at His Diſpoſal, as much as if the Aſſertion was true. Therefore the ſecond Argument in Mr. Needler's *Letter has no Force. Becauſe God having given to Creatures all the Qualities they have, can alſo reſume and change them at Pleaſure; And they entirely depend upon His Permiſſion for their Being, and upon His Good Providence for their Well-being. In a Word, I can ſee no manner of Reaſon to aſſert; That a continual poſitive Act of Omnipotence is neceſſary to ſecure a Creature from reſolving into Nought; for then Exiſtence is one continued Violence offer'd to the Creature; and, as the B. of* Sarum *ſays, it has a Tendency to its own Deſtruction; which is abſurd: For Being and Not-being are perfectly oppoſite, and can have no Propenſity to meet; and it requires as great a Power to reconcile That to This, as This to That. And it is plain that his Lordſhip's Aſſertion is true, Becauſe, according to this*

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Affirmation, merely upon the ceaſing of this Omnipotent Act, it falls into Nothing, without any poſitive Act exerted upon it, i. e. *Leave it but to it ſelf, and it will ſink out of Being.*

Briefly to recapitulate the Whole. The Aſſertion is capable of a double Senſe, a Poſitive and a Negative. In the 1*ſt, it is true*; *In the* 2*d, not. The*

Firſt is, *That if God ſhould ceaſe to allow of the Exiſtence of a Creature, it could not exiſt.* Conced:

Second, *That if God ſhould merely give it up to ſhift for it ſelf, and ceaſe to exert this formal Reſolution,* I will this to exiſt, *it would not exiſt.* Neg:

If a Creature is annihilated, it muſt be either by the Power of another Being put forth upon it, or by a Propenſity inſerted in its Nature. The firſt belongs to God alone, and has no Place in the Queſtion thus ſtated. The ſecond does not appear by any Properties or Operations of Creatures. They have a Propenſity to Mutation, but That does not infer a Propenſity to Not-being. For it can never

ver be prov'd, that Exiſtence, ſimply as ſuch, muſt neceſſarily ceaſe, unleſs Omnipotence perpetually exerts it ſelf poſitively, to preſerve it.

A Diſtinction is to be made between the Will and the Power of God, which are two different Attributes. A Poſitive Infinite Power is neceſſary to produce a Creature; and the ſame Poſitive Infinite Power ſeems, as far as we can judge, neceſſary to uncreate.

To Mr. *D.*

Portſmouth, *October* 5, 1711.

Dear SIR,

YOU will eaſily believe that I am but ill qualified, in the midſt of Noiſe and Buſineſs, to perform the Task you have ſet me; namely, To give a full and particular Anſwer to Mr. *H----s*'s Objections. But however, ſince I cannot be convinced that any of his Exceptions are well grounded, much leſs that the main Propoſition which I undertook to prove in

my Letter is falſe, I think my ſelf obliged to make ſome Reply, and to endeavour to ſhew the Inconcluſiveneſs of his Arguments.

Firſt then I find it affirm'd, *That the Propoſition it ſelf is not laid down with ſufficient Clearneſs and Diſtinction, but is capable of a double Meaning.* Not having time to take Copies of my Letters, I cannot produce the very Words of the Propoſition as expreſs'd in the Letter, but ſuppoſing they are preciſely the ſame with thoſe in the Remarks, *viz. That if God ſhou'd ceaſe to will a Creature to exiſt, it wou'd immediately fall back into Nothing,* I cannot ſee but they expreſs my true Meaning with ſufficient Clearneſs and Certainty. For, according to common Uſe and Cuſtom, he is not ſaid to Will a thing, who only does not Will the contrary; but he who poſitively Wills That thing ſhou'd Be. Thus if any one ſhou'd ſay, God wills that a human Soul ſhall exiſt, I think he wou'd not be underſtood to mean only, Negatively; That God did not

not will that a human Soul ſhou'd not exiſt; but that he will'd poſitively, that a human Soul ſhou'd exiſt. But if to Will a thing to Be, ſignifies, according to common Acceptation, the ſame as to have a Poſitive Volition that it ſhou'd Be; then certainly to ceaſe to Will a thing to Be, can ſignifie nothing properly, but to ceaſe to put forth any Poſitive Act of Volition, that it ſhou'd Be. Beſides, it is not to be ſuppos'd, that he who deſign'd to expreſs this Propoſition, *If God ſhou'd poſitively will that a Creature ſhall not Be, it wou'd immediately ceaſe to exiſt*; wou'd chuſe ſuch a Form of Words, as are evidently more proper to be underſtood in a different Senſe. This I ſay, to ſhew that the Propoſition, taken by it ſelf, is ſufficiently clear. But, after all, if it had been doubtful in it ſelf, there are ſo many Paſſages in the Letter, which determine it to a Poſitive Senſe, that no one, after he had read that, cou'd have made any Queſtion what was the true Senſe of it; much leſs the Perſon to whom it was addreſs'd,

addreſs'd, who was previouſly acquainted with my Notions upon that Subject. So that I cannot think my-ſelf guilty of a Tranſgreſſion of that fundamental Rule of *Logick*, which requires, *That the Propoſition to be proved, be (above all others) expreſs'd ſo diſtinctly and determinately, as entirely to exclude all Ambiguity of Meaning.*

Another Paſſage, which I find charg'd with doubtfulneſs of Senſe, is this; *In order to preſerve a Creature in Being, the ſame Cauſe, which gave it Being, muſt never be withdrawn from it.* This Propoſition is affirm'd to be capable of a double Senſe, namely; Either that the very Act of Creation muſt be inceſſantly exerted; or that not the ſame, but ſome other Act of Omnipotence than that whereby it was created, is neceſſary to preſerve a Creature. And yet it is aſſerted, that the firſt of theſe Senſes is Nonſenſe. But I muſt confeſs, I do not underſtand, how a Propoſition can be capable of ſuch a Senſe, as is no Senſe at all; and I ſhou'd think I had ſufficiently ſecur'd a Propoſition from

from Ambiguity of Meaning, if I had ſo expreſs'd it, as that it cou'd be took but one way without making Nonſenſe of it. But to let that paſs; I think it is plain, that he who affirms; That an Act of God is the Cauſe of the Exiſtence of Creatures, and that in order to continue their Exiſtence, that Cauſe muſt likewiſe be continued; does not mean that, in order to continue the Exiſtence of Creatures, it is neceſſary God ſhou'd preſerve them by an Act diſtinct from that whereby he at firſt caus'd them to exiſt, but by the Continuance of the very ſame numerical Act. And this is neither Nonſenſe nor Abſurdity. For 'tis one thing to ſay, That in order to continue the Exiſtence of Creatures, 'tis neceſſary the ſame Divine Act, whereby they exiſted at their firſt Creation, ſhou'd likewiſe be continued; (which, by the way, ſeems to me a Propoſition ſufficiently plain in it ſelf, as to the Truth as well as Meaning of it, to any one that will conſider it with Attention and Indifference;) and another thing to ſay, That the very

very Act of Creation muſt be inceſſantly exerted. For the one implies, that the ſame numerical Act, conſider'd as exiſting in the ſame Moment of Time, muſt be continued; which indeed is Nonſenſe. The other, that the ſame numerical Act muſt be continued thro' the ſeveral ſucceſſive Moments of Duration, wherein the Creature exiſts, but not conſider'd as exiſting all the while in the ſame firſt Moment.

So that, according to my Notions, Preſervation may in a Senſe be called a continual Creation, foraſmuch as a Creature is preſerv'd in Being by the Continuance of the ſame numerical Act, whereby it was created or caus'd at firſt to Be, co-exiſting along with it thro' all the ſucceſſive Moments of its Duration. So that the Act whereby a Creature, which has continued to exiſt, ſuppoſe, a Twelvemonth, is at this Inſtant preſerv'd in Being, differs no otherwiſe from That whereby it was a Twelvemonth ago firſt caus'd to Be, than the Creature it ſelf differs now from

from what it was a Twelvemonth ago, that is, only in reſpect of Duration of Exiſtence; and in this is imply'd no Contradiction. All the Contradiction lies, in ſuppoſing this Divine Act (inſtead of continuing to cauſe a Creature to exiſt, which it had before caus'd to begin to Be,) *perpetually* to cauſe a Creature to exiſt in the *firſt* Moment of its Exiſtence.

In ſhort, Creation is an Ambiguous Term, and may either ſignifie ſimply, the cauſing a thing to Be for any certain Part of Duration, without determining whether that thing had exiſted before or not; or the cauſing a thing to begin to Be, or giving the firſt Moment of Exiſtence to a thing which before was not. Now if Creation be taken in the firſt Senſe, To preſerve a Being is the ſame as inceſſantly to create it. But if in the ſecond, it is not.

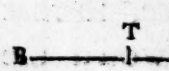
Thus having endeavour'd to ſettle and determine the true and preciſe Meaning of thoſe Terms uſed in the Controverſy, that were

were thought uncertain, (which was neceſſary to be done in the firſt Place), I proceed now to anſwer the Objections againſt the Propoſition, and the Arguments I urg'd to ſupport it, as thus explain'd.

Firſt then it is aſſerted, *That this Argument*, ſublatâ Causâ, tollitur Effectus, *is not Univerſally true*; *foraſmuch as there are ſome Effects which continue, even after their Cauſes are deſtroy'd*; *as a Clock or Houſe, which remain, when the Workman, who made them, is dead.* To this I anſwer, That it appears by the whole Tenour of the Argument, againſt which this Objection is brought, that a Creature is of that laſt ſort of Effects, which, 'tis granted, depend upon the Preſence and unintermitted Operation of the Cauſe. The Argument runs thus; 'Tis allow'd, that a Creature, in the firſt Moment of its Exiſtence, depends entirely upon an Act of the Divine Omnipotence, ſo that if that Act were not, neither wou'd the

Creature Be; for thus much is imply'd in the very Notion of Creation. Let us then ſuppoſe this Act of the Divine Omnipotence withdrawn from a Creature thus depending on it; and is it not plain, that the Creature will fall back into Nothing? 'Tis wholly ſuſtain'd by this Act, and therefore, if it be withdrawn, it muſt needs ſink. Now by this Repreſentation of the Argument, it appears, that Creatures are of that ſecond ſort of Effects which Mr. *H---s* mentions; And conſequently that the *Axiom* may be rightly applied to them. But if it cou'd not, that wou'd make nothing againſt the Validity of my Argument, which does not at all depend upon it, and is complete without it. I only refer'd to it as to a known Maxim, which ſeem'd well to agree with the Concluſion I had drawn, but did not uſe it as part of the Argument.

But, farther to illuſtrate this Argument;



Let us ſuppoſe a Body, as (A), by it-ſelf in a void Space;

Space; and let it be requir'd to prove, that upon Suppoſition that (A) cannot begin to move of it ſelf towards (B), without the Action of God upon it, that then, even after God has put it in Motion, it can move no longer, than his Power continues to impell it. Let then ſome ſmall Part of the Line (AB) be mark'd off, thro' which let it be ſuppos'd that God having caus'd (A) to move, ceaſes to put forth the impulſive Act. Now ſince the only Cauſe of A's moving thro' the indefinitely ſmall Space (AT), was the Action of God upon it; and ſince that Action is now withdrawn, and has left it to it ſelf; it neceſſarily follows, that (A) can move no longer; the Cauſe upon which its Motion depended being taken away. Now if for a Body, be put a Creature; for Motion, Exiſtence; for beginning to Move, beginning to Be; for an indefinitely ſmall Part of Space, a Moment or indefinitely ſmall Part of Duration; *&c.* this Argument will be juſt the ſame

as that uſed before; and therefore, if duly compar'd with it, may ſerve to give it ſome Light.

Mr. *H——s* affirms, *That, if a Creature cannot exiſt without a continual poſitive Act of Omnipotence, it muſt be either becauſe God cou'd not; or becauſe he wou'd not make it otherwiſe. But (ſays he) it cannot be the firſt.* I admit the Enumeration; but I deny the ſecond Propoſition; *viz.* that which implies, That God can, if he pleaſes, produce Creatures, which ſhall continue to exiſt, tho' he ſhou'd not ſuſtain them by a *poſitive Act* of his Omnipotence. For I think I have ſhewn; That to ſuppoſe God to make ſuch a Creature, implies a Contradiction: And therefore I hope no Philoſopher will accuſe me of Irreverence, if I preſume to affirm, That he cannot do it; Since Omnipotence it ſelf cannot effect that which is in its own Nature Impoſſible.

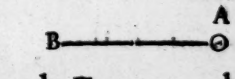
A little farther I find theſe Words; *That a Creature ſhou'd exiſt, unleſs a poſitive Act*

of Omnipotence is put forth to deſtroy it, does in no manner diminiſh either the Power, Wiſdom, Freedom, or Majeſty of God; becauſe it is ſtill abſolutely at his Diſpoſal, as much as if the Aſſertion was true. I allow, if a Creature were indeed as abſolutely at God's Diſpoſal upon this Hypotheſis as mine, I cou'd not juſtly argue againſt it from the Power and other Attributes of God. But *that* I deny; and think I have prov'd, in the Letter which occaſion'd this Controverſy, that if a Creature does not depend upon a *poſitive Act* of the Divine Omnipotence for its Exiſtence, it cannot be annihilated: which to affirm, is certainly to diminiſh the Divine Power.

Mr. *H——s* proceeds thus: *If a continual poſitive Act of Omnipotence is neceſſary to ſecure a Creature from reſolving into Nought, then Exiſtence is one continued Violence offer'd to the Creature; and, as the Biſhop of* Sarum *ſays, it has a Tendency to its own Deſtruction; which is abſurd: For Being and Not-being are perfectly oppoſite,*

and can have no Propenſity to meet; and it requires as great a Power to reconcile That to This, as This to That. And it is plain that his Lordſhip's Aſſertion is true; becauſe, according to this Affirmation, merely upon the ceaſing of this Omnipotent Act, it falls into Nothing, without any poſitive Act exerted upon it; i. e. *Leave it but to it-ſelf, and it will ſink out of Being.* The Senſe of this Objection ſeems doubtful; foraſmuch as the Tendency to Annihilation, which it affirms to follow upon my Hypotheſis, may be taken either Negatively or Poſitively; that is, Creatures may be ſaid to have a Tendency to Annihilation, either, Negatively, upon Account of their wanting any poſitive Ability to Be: or elſe, Poſitively, as having ſome Degree of a real Propenſion to Not-being. To illuſtrate this Diſtinction by an Example: A Piece of well-temper'd Steel (ſuppoſe the Spring of a Watch) being forcibly bent out of its natural Poſture, may be ſaid to have a poſitive Endeavour to return to its Original

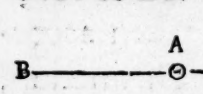
Original State; ſince even while it is retain'd by a Superior Power, it nevertheleſs exerts ſome Degree of Reſiſtance, and will certainly fly back, as ſoon as that outward Force, which reſtrains it, is remov'd. And the forcible Retention of a thing in ſuch a State as this, to which it has a poſitive Oppoſition, is properly ſaid to be Violent, or a Violence offer'd to it. But now, to give an Inſtance of the other Part of the Diſtinction; If we ſuppoſe the Body (A), to be mov'd along the Line (A B) by an External Force; the Tendency which (A) has to ceaſe to move, when that Force is taken away, is merely Negative, implying nothing of any real Endeavour exerted by (A) to be at reſt; but conſiſting in a mere Negation of any poſitive Power, to move of it-ſelf.



Now if the Objection be taken according to the firſt Part of the Diſtinction, I deny the Conſequence, which it charges upon my Principles, to be genuine: If it

be taken according to the ſecond Part, I own the Conſequence, but deny the Abſurdity of it.

Firſt I ſay, that it does not at all follow from this Principle; *If a Creature was left to it-ſelf, it wou'd ceaſe to Be*; that there is in Creatures any poſitive Tendency to Not-being. This appears clearly from hence, That if we ſuppoſe 'em to have only a Negative Propenſion to Not-being, ſo that they cannot ſubſiſt without an External Support, it muſt needs follow, that if they have no ſuch Support, but are left entirely to themſelves, they muſt ceaſe to Be. For, if a Creature has no poſitive Power to Be, 'tis evident that it muſt ceaſe to exiſt, if it be left to it-ſelf, altho' at the ſame time it be ſuppos'd to have no poſitive Tendency Not to Be. Thus if we ſuppoſe the Body



(A) to be mov'd along the Line (AB), and that it has no Power to move of it-ſelf, or without the Action of ſome External Force upon

upon it; 'tis plain, that if it be left to it-ſelf, it will preſently ceaſe to move, thro' the mere Want of a ſelf-active Principle; altho' it be allow'd to have no manner of poſitive Tendency to Reſt.

That which is apt to make People believe, that Creatures, upon this *Hypotheſis*, muſt have ſomewhat of a poſitive Tendency to Not-being, is; That they conſider a Creature as exiſting, after it is deſerted by the Divine Omnipotence, and then of its own accord making its Exit. If this indeed were the Caſe, it muſt have a poſitive Propenſity to Not-being. But this Conception of the Matter is entirely falſe; for what I aſſert is; That in the very ſame individual Inſtant of Time, in which God ſhou'd ceaſe to put forth a formal poſitive Act of his Omnipotence to ſuſtain the Creature, it wou'd ceaſe to Be: And not that it wou'd remain in Being any Time after the Ceſſation of that Act, and then drop into Nothing,

thing without any External Cauſe, Poſitive, or Negative. For, according to what I maintain; The Exiſtence and Non-exiſtence of Creatures are inſeparably connected with the Exiſtence and Non-exiſtence of this poſitive Act; ſo that in the very Inſtant that the one ariſes into Being, the other likewiſe ariſes: And in the very Inſtant that the one ceaſes, the other alſo ceaſes. There is indeed a Priority, in order of Nature or Conception, of the Act of the Divine Omnipotence, to the Exiſtence of the Creature which it cauſes to Be; and of the Ceſſation of the Act, to the Ceſſation of the Creature; becauſe the one is preſuppos'd to the other, as the Cauſe to the Effect. But in reſpect of Time, the one has no manner of Priority to the other. For as the Image in the Glaſs attends, and depends upon the Preſence of the Perſon whoſe Image it is, ſo that he no ſooner preſents himſelf, but the Image appears, and no ſooner re-

removes, but it vaniſhes: Even ſo Creatures (which are but Images and Shadows of the Divine Ideas), depend upon God's Omnipotent Act; which no ſooner commences, but they alſo begin to exiſt; and no ſooner ceaſes, but they drop into Nothing.

Thus it appears, that if the Objection be underſtood according to the firſt Part of the Diſtinction, it is no true Conſequence of the Principle I maintain. But if it be taken according to the ſecond Part, it muſt be acknowledg'd that the Conſequence is genuine; For if a Creature, when left to it-ſelf, will immediately ceaſe to exiſt, it unavoidably follows, that it has a Negative Propenſion to Not-being; *i. e. that it is in it-ſelf void of any real Power to Be.*

It remains therefore, for me to ſhew, that there is no Abſurdity in this Conſequence. The Argument which is brought to prove, that it is abſurd to imagine, that Creatures have any Tendency

to

to Not-being, is this: *Being and Not-being are perfectly oppoſite, and can have no Propenſity to meet; and it requires as great a Power to reconcile that to this, as this to that.* But if this Argument prov'd any thing, it wou'd prove a great deal too much. For ſince it is true, that Being and Not-being are perfectly oppoſite; If to create or annihilate, were to reconcile them together and make 'em meet, it wou'd follow, that it was abſolutely impoſſible that any thing ſhou'd be created or annihilated even by the Power of God himſelf; which, as infinite as it is, does not extend to the reconciling Contradictions, or to the conjoining ſuch things, whoſe Ideas have not antecedently a conceivable Union in their own Natures. But the Truth of it is, this Argument proceeds upon a mere Equivocation; and there needs only a little Diſtinction to ſhew the Invalidity of it. It is affirmed, that Being and Not-being are perfectly

perfectly oppoſite. I grant it; if by Being be meant the ſame as Exiſtence. For it is certain, that Exiſtence and Non-exiſtence are perfectly oppoſite, and can never be reconcil'd or made to meet. But if by Being be meant any thing which has Being, or exiſts; I deny that whatever has Exiſtence is oppoſite to Not-being; Becauſe every thing which exiſts, is not Being it ſelf. GOD indeed is *Being it-ſelf*. His very Eſſence is *Exiſtence*; (which is the higheſt and moſt exalted Idea we can poſſibly frame of that Incomprehenſible Excellence;) and therefore *He* muſt needs be abſolutely Incapable of Not-being. But as for other Subſtances, they are only *things that exiſt*; but they are not *Exiſtence it-ſelf*; and ſo have no Contrariety in their Natures to Not-being. From the Oppoſition of Being to Not-being, to infer that Creatures wou'd not ceaſe to Be, tho' left entirely to themſelves, is, as if one ſhou'd reaſon

reaſon thus: (A) is a Body in Motion towards (B); But Motion is perfectly oppoſite to Reſt; Therefore (A), tho' left entirely to it-ſelf, wou'd not ceaſe to move. Here it wou'd be obvious to reply, that tho' it be very true, that Motion cannot be Reſt; yet that ſince (A) is not Motion it-ſelf, but only ſomething which has Motion, this Argument concludes nothing againſt the Ceſſation of the Motion of (A), upon its being left to it-ſelf. For Motion does not belong to it as an Eſſential Property, but only as an Accident. Juſt ſo, tho' it be very true, that Being is perfectly contrary to Not-being, yet ſince Creatures are not *Being it-ſelf*, but only things which have Being, it cannot be infer'd from thence, that they cannot ceaſe to Be, tho' left entirely to themſelves. Beſides, (as I obſerv'd before,) if this Argument were juſt, it wou'd prove in general, that nothing which is, can ceaſe to Be by any means

at

at all, and not particularly by being left to it-ſelf.

In ſhort, this Argument ought to have prov'd, that a *Creature* has no Negative Tendency to Not-being; or, which is all one, that it can ſubſiſt of it-ſelf, or without any External Support: Inſtead of which, it proves only, that *Being* or *Exiſtence* it-ſelf muſt neceſſarily Be: Or, if it did prove any thing more, it wou'd not be, that a Creature cou'd ſubſiſt, and wou'd not ceaſe to Be, tho' it ſhou'd be left entirely to it-ſelf; But that there was a Neceſſity of its Exiſtence, and that it cou'd not ceaſe to Be at all. This laſt Objection being borrow'd from the Biſhop of *Sarum*, I might have refer'd to what I had already ſaid in Anſwer thereto; But I thought the Method here uſed, more proper to lay open the Fallacy of it in all its parts.

In Mr. *H*-----*s*'s Recapitulation, I find this farther Objection hinted: *It can never be prov'd that Exiſtence, ſimply as ſuch, muſt neceſſarily ceaſe, unleſs Omnipotence perpetually*

tually exerts it-ſelf poſitively, to preſerve it.

I agree that it cannot be prov'd, (becauſe it is not true) that Exiſtence, ſimply as ſuch, muſt neceſſarily ceaſe, unleſs Omnipotence perpetually exerts itſelf poſitively, to preſerve it. For then Omnipotence it-ſelf wou'd need another Omnipotence to ſupport it in Being. But the Queſtion is not, whether it can be prov'd, that *Exiſtence in general and as Exiſtence* wou'd ceaſe, if not preſerv'd by a poſitive Act of Omnipotence; but whether *created Exiſtence* wou'd not. And to argue that it wou'd not, becauſe it is not true that *Exiſtence in general* wou'd, is, as if in Geometry one ſhou'd reaſon thus: A Rectilineal Figure in general, and ſo far forth as a Rectilineal Figure, has not all its Angles equal to two Right ones; Therefore neither has a Triangle (which is a particular Species of Rectilineal Figures), all its Angles equal to two Right ones.

Or

Or thus; A Triangle, conſider'd only ſo far forth as a Rectilineal Figure, has not all its Angles equal to two Right ones; Therefore neither has a Triangle, conſider'd as a Triangle, all its Angles equal to two Right ones.

Having given a particular (and, as I hope, ſatisfactory) Anſwer to all Mr. *H----s*'s Objections againſt the Propoſition maintain'd in my Letter, and the Validity of thoſe Reaſons I there uſed to ſupport it, I will proceed now to add ſome new Arguments to prove the ſame Principle.

Firſt therefore; Let it be conſider'd, that ſince Being and Not-being are two oppoſite Effects, they ought to have two contrary Cauſes; ſince therefore it is granted, that God creates, or cauſes Creatures to Be, by a poſitive Act of his Omnipotence, He muſt produce the contrary Effect, that is, cauſe them not to Be, by a privative or negative Act; that is, by the Abſence or Removal of a poſitive Act.

Not-being is the Negation of Being; And therefore the Cauſe of Not-being, muſt be the Negation of the Cauſe of Being. Where the Effect is merely Negative, certainly the Cauſe cannot be Poſitive. To this I may add, That every Poſitive Act produces ſomething; for where Nothing is produced, there is no Action. But to annihilate a Creature, is to produce Nothing; Therefore Annihilation cannot be perform'd by a Poſitive Act.

Secondly, Every thing that now exiſts, has either ſome Principle of Exiſtence in it-ſelf; or elſe exiſts by Virtue of ſome External Cauſe. Or, in other Words, Every thing exiſts, either becauſe it is *of its Nature or Eſſence to Be*; or becauſe it is made to Be, by Virtue of ſomething External to it-ſelf. This muſt needs be true; for if a thing exiſts, and yet does not derive its Exiſtence from any External Cauſe, it muſt have Exiſtence *of it-ſelf*; that is, it muſt belong to

to the Nature and formal Reaſon of that thing to Be. But Creatures exiſt; If therefore they do not at this preſent Time owe their Exiſtence to ſome External Cauſe, (which it is affirm'd, they do not,) they muſt have Exiſtence included in themſelves, that is, in their own proper Nature and Eſſence. But (beſides that 'tis the ſole Prerogative of the Great Fountain of Being, to be thus Self-exiſtent, and to have his Exiſtence involv'd in his very Nature and Eſſence,) it muſt needs be a Contradiction to ſuppoſe a thing Not to Be, *of whoſe Nature and Eſſence it is to Be*; as much as it wou'd be a Contradiction to affirm, That to have all its Diameters Equal, was a Natural or Eſſential Property of a Circle; and yet nevertheleſs, That a Circle might not have all its Diameters Equal. Therefore it is impoſſible, that Creatures ſhou'd not Be; And they muſt have exiſted from all Eternity, as well as continue to exiſt to all Eternity. Which is a flat Contradiction to the formal Notion of a Creature.

Thirdly, Since, by Conceſſion, Creatures may be annihilated, it follows; That they are not abſolutely Independent as to their Exiſtence; for it is Evident, that their Exiſtence depends upon the Abſence of that Change in things, (whatever it be,) which wou'd cauſe their Annihilation. But a Creature can depend upon Nothing, but what coexiſts along with it; for it is a flat Contradiction to ſuppoſe a Creature depending for its Exiſtence upon that which is not, *i. e.* upon Nothing. Conſequently, the Creatures, which now are, depend for their Exiſtence upon the Being of ſomething, which likewiſe now is. But I ſuppoſe it will eaſily be granted, that they do not depend upon one another for their Exiſtence; It remains therefore, that they depend upon an Act of the Divine Omnipotence. Or thus;

Either a Creature has ſome Cauſe of its preſent Exiſtence, or it has not. If it has, it muſt be either the Exiſtence or the

the Non-exiſtence of Something. But it cannot be the Non-exiſtence of ſomething; for the Non-exiſtence of a thing, *i. e.* Nothing, can never be the Cauſe of any thing: Nor can a thing, which is, have any Dependence, as to its Exiſtence, upon that which is not, or Nothing; (as before.) Wherefore if a Creature has a Cauſe whereon its Exiſtence depends, it muſt be the Exiſtence of ſomething. But ſince Creatures cannot reaſonably be ſuppos'd, nor are aſſerted to have any Dependence upon any thing but God, it remains, That if they have any Cauſe at all whereon they depend for their Exiſtence, it muſt be the Exiſtence of an Act of God.

But it is plain, That Creatures have ſome Cauſe, on the Exiſtence of which they depend, becauſe they may be Annihilated or ceaſe to Be. For if a thing exiſts independent of any Cauſe, there is no annihilating it; for it would be a Contradiction, to ſuppoſe any thing done in External Nature, in the leaſt to affect a

Being exiſting independently of All about it.

Farther, If the Not-being of Creatures is caus'd by a poſitive Act of the Divine Omnipotence, it follows, That they depend for their Exiſtence upon the Abſence of that Act; *i. e.* upon Nothing. Which is a Contradiction. To affirm that a thing is, by Virtue of the Abſence of a poſitive Act; and that it is not, by Virtue of the Preſence of it; is perfectly to invert the true Order of things, by making Being the Cauſe of Not-being, and Not-being the Cauſe of Being.

Fourthly, Since it is granted, that every poſitive Act of the Divine Power preſuppoſes an Act of the Divine Will correſpondent thereto, if it can be prov'd that God cannot poſitively will that a Creature ſhall Not Be, it will follow, That he cannot by a Poſitive Act cauſe it to ceaſe to Be. But that God cannot poſitively will, that a Creature ſhall Not Be, may be thus prov'd. Every Volition

on or Act of the Divine Will muſt have ſome Object; For, To will Nothing, is Not to will at all. But to will that a thing ſhall not exiſt, is to will the Non-exiſtence of it; Therefore if God ſhou'd poſitively will, that a Creature ſhou'd Not Exiſt, the Object of his Will wou'd be Non-exiſtence, *i. e.* Nothing; which is Impoſſible.

Fifthly, A Creature, before it exiſts in Nature, is only an Idea in the Divine Mind of ſomething, to which God may, if he pleaſes, by an Act of his Omnipotence give Exiſtence. A Creature therefore is a Being, according to its Eſſence, which has only a bare Capacity or Poſſibility to Be by Virtue of an Act of the Divine Omnipotence, but no actual Power to Be *of it-ſelf*. Now ſince, even after it has begun to Be, it ſtill retains the Nature of a Creature, and anſwers that Original Idea, whereby it was made, it follows, That even then it has, in reſpect of the Future, only a Capacity of

exiſting by Virtue of the Divine Omnipotence; and ſo, by reaſon of its natural Impotence and Imperfection, continually ſtands in need of the Divine Power to uphold it in Being.

To ſuppoſe a Creature ſubſiſting by itſelf, ſeems to Me to imply a Contradiction to the very Definition of it, which is; *Something that has only a Capacity or Poſſibility of Exiſting by an Act of the Divine Omnipotence.*

To conclude, I hope what has been ſaid will be ſufficient to convince Mr. *H——s* of the Truth of the Propoſition mention'd in my Letter, and to ſatisfie him of the Invalidity of his Objections. What ſtill remains, is to anſwer his Arguments to prove a real Diſtinction between the Will and Power of God, which I have regarded in my Letter as one and the ſame. But becauſe the Diſcuſſion of that nice Point wou'd protract this Letter to too great a Length; and becauſe it is all one, in reſpect of the Truth of the Principle I have now

been defending, which ſide of that Queſtion is true; or whether the Divine Act, whereby Creatures are caus'd to Be, be ſimple or complex; I purpoſely defer it to a following Letter; and ſhall only obſerve at preſent, that Mr. *H——s* has not yet anſwer'd thoſe Arguments I have already uſed, to prove that the Power of God is nothing really diſtinct from his Will, in my Letter concerning *the true Cauſe of Natural Effects*, which you inform'd me, you had ſhew'd him.

I am, Dear SIR,

Your ſincere Friend,

and very humble Servant,

H. NEEDLER.

An

An Argument to prove, that a Creature will continue to exiſt, 'till God ſhall exert a poſitive Act of Power to deſtroy it.

AND in Favour of this, (viz. *the foregoing Propoſition*), *I ſhall offer this Argument,* viz. *If an Almighty Power be required to bring Something out of Nothing, or* (*as it is phras'd*) *to reconcile thoſe infinitely-diſtant Terms, Nothing and Something; Then the ſame Almighty Power is required to bring Something into Nothing again, and ſo to reconcile the ſame infinitely-diſtant Terms, Something and Nothing; for I conceive the one as difficult as the other; As the ſame Time and Labour is required to go from* Oxford *to* London, *as from* London *to* Oxford. *Now then if an Almighty Power be neceſſary to make Something,*

Something, Nothing; then as long as this Power is not exerted, this Something will remain Something, in ſpight of any thing inferior to that Power. Now from this the Inference is, That in order to Annihilation, there is more required than a bare withdrawing the Divine Influx, namely, an exerting of an Almighty Power; and conſequently when God has once brought a thing into Being, tho' he turn it looſe to it-ſelf and take no more Care about it, (that is, exert no poſitive Influence in its Conſervation), it will ſtill continue in Exiſtence.

Mr. NEEDLER's *Reply.*

IF a poſitive Act of an Almighty Power cou'd be proved to be neceſſary to make Something, Nothing, (as is here aſſerted), I own it wou'd plainly follow, that when God had once brought a thing into Being, tho' he turn'd it looſe and took no more Care about it, or exerted no poſitive Influence in its Conſerva-

Conſervation, it wou'd ſtill continue in Exiſtence. But the Argument here brought to prove this, is far from being Concluſive.

The Subſtance of the Argument is; *Something is as diſtant from or oppoſite to Nothing, as Nothing to Something; therefore to make that, which is Something, Nothing, muſt needs be as difficult, as to make that which is Nothing, Something; But to make that which is Nothing, Something, requires an Act of infinite Power. Therefore to make that which is Something, Nothing, muſt likewiſe require an Act of infinite Power.*

The firſt Propoſition, *viz.* That Something is as diſtant from or oppoſite to Nothing, as Nothing to Something, or that a State of Exiſtence is as oppoſite to a State of Non-exiſtence, as a State of Non-exiſtence to that of Exiſtence, is unqueſtionable. But from hence it by no means follows, that it is as difficult, or requires as great a Degree of poſitive Power,

Power, to make a thing, which now exiſts, ceaſe to exiſt; as to make a thing, which now is not, begin to Be. For here lies the Difference; Exiſtence is Something Real and Poſitive, and conſequently cannot be produced but by a poſitive Power; But Non-exiſtence, on the contrary, is Nothing Real or Poſitive, but a mere Negation of Exiſtence. For which Reaſon, it is plain, that unleſs it be ſuppoſed, That to annihilate is ſomewhat more than to ceaſe to ſupport, (which to ſuppoſe, wou'd be to ſuppoſe the very thing in Queſtion,) it will be ſufficient, in order to annihilate, to withdraw that Act of poſitive Power, whereby the Creature ſubſiſts; and therefore, that (notwithſtanding the reciprocal Oppoſition between Exiſtence and Non-exiſtence,) it is ſo far from being true, that as great and poſitive a Power is required to Annihilate, as to Create, that indeed no poſitive Power at all is required for that Purpoſe. This is, as if I ſhou'd

ſay,

ſay, Silence is as oppoſite to Sound, as Sound to Silence. Therefore it muſt require as much poſitive Power, after Sound has exiſted, to reſtore Silence, as to give Birth to Sound. It wou'd be thought a ſufficient Anſwer to this Sophiſm, to reply; That tho' Sound, which is ſomewhat poſitive, requires a poſitive Act of Power to produce it; yet to cauſe Silence, (which is only the Negation or Abſence of Sound,) it is ſufficient to forbear to produce Sound. And, for my Part, I cannot ſee, why the like Anſwer ſhou'd not be ſatisfactory in the other Caſe.

In ſhort; This Argument ſuppoſes Annihilation to be an Act of poſitive Power; and thence concludes, that becauſe the Change from Being to Not-being, is as great as from Not-being to Being, therefore the Power muſt be as great in the one Caſe as the other. Very true, if both were effected by a poſitive Power. But how if it ſhou'd be denied, that Annihilation

lation is the Effect or Object of any positive Power at all? Will this Argument prove that it is? Nothing less. For what Consequence is this;

> Existence is as opposite to Non-existence, as Non-existence to Existence;
>
> *Ergo*, To annihilate is the Effect of a Positive Power.

So that in this Argument there is a *secret Begging*, or rather *Stealing of the Question*. For here it is tacitly suppos'd, That to annihilate is the Effect or Object of a positive Power; and thence it is infer'd, that this Power must needs be as infinite, as that which creates.

Portſ-

Portſmouth, *October* 19, 1711.

Dear SIR,

I Shou'd be glad to ſee the Deſign You mention, happily executed. The Advantages which may be expected from a judicious Collection of well-atteſted Narratives relating to Apparitions, will amply reward the Pains beſtow'd about it: For from thence we may not only draw a convincing Proof of the Immortality of the Soul, and the Certainty of a Future State; but be inabled, in ſome meaſure, to judge of the Nature and Condition of a ſeparate Spirit. Of the firſt of theſe; *viz.* the Immortality of the Soul, our own Reaſon perhaps may give us a pretty good Aſſurance. But (beſides that an Article of ſo great Importance, can never be too fully and clearly made out,) tho' we may learn from it, that there is a future State, yet as to the *Nature* and *Quality* of it, it leaves us almoſt entirely in the Dark. Nor can we expect to obtain any certain Knowledge

ledge of the Laws and Cuſtoms of thoſe Regions, where departed Souls reſide, by the bare Speculation of our own Minds; any more than a Man might hope to ſit at home in his Study, and by pure dint of Contemplation diſcover the Laws, Religions and Opinions of the *Perſians* and *Indians*. Since therefore we cannot, by the mere Uſe of our Natural Faculties, be acquainted with the Condition of departed Souls, there remains no other way to learn it in this Life, than from the Diſcoveries that they make of themſelves to us. We cannot, as the Poets feign of their Heroes, deſcend to the Manſions of the Dead; and, after having inform'd our ſelves of the Nature and Laws of a ſeparate State, return to Life again. So that the Knowledge with which theſe Narratives wou'd furniſh us, wou'd not only be very curious and uſeful, but ſuch as it is impoſſible for us by any other Means to obtain. For theſe Reaſons, I ſhou'd be very glad to ſee a well-atteſted Collection of 'em, and wou'd willingly contribute what Aſſiſtance I was capable of towards it. But not being able

at preſent to recollect any unexceptionable Relations of this Kind, I muſt wave that part of the Work; reſolving for the future to have a more careful Regard to what Accounts I may happen to meet with concerning theſe Matters. Nevertheleſs I do really believe, that ſuch Apparitions have actually been ſeen: For that ſo many Perſons, of all Sorts and Conditions, in all Places and Ages of the World, as have atteſted the Truth of them, ſhou'd either have conſpir'd to deceive, or be deceiv'd in a Matter of Senſe and Experience, ſeems to me more Strange and Unaccountable, than any thing contain'd in the Suppoſal of them.

Therefore that which I deſign to perform at preſent, is to prepare the Way for ſuch a Collection, by anſwering thoſe Objections againſt Apparitions, which tend to ſhew, that they are impoſſible in themſelves, and conſequently incapable of being prov'd by any Teſtimony. For it may be obſerv'd, that many will argue againſt them, not from the Suſpiciouſneſs and Inſufficiency of the Teſtimonies, but from the

the ſuppos'd Impoſſibility of the thing it ſelf. Now in order to convince theſe Men, it will be neceſſary to ſhew in the firſt place, that thoſe Objections they bring againſt Apparitions in *general*, are not valid; for, 'till that be done, we ſhall in vain attempt to perſuade them of the Truth of any *particular* Narrative. I am not ſo uncharitable, as to believe that all are Atheiſts, who deny Apparitions; which to affirm, wou'd be as falſe, as it wou'd be Mean-ſpirited and Vulgar. But tho' this Propoſition be not true; *All that deny the Reality of Apparitions, are Atheiſts.* Yet I think the Converſe of it is undoubtedly ſo; *viz. That all Atheiſts; or, in general, All that deny the Being of a God, the Immortality of the Soul and a future State, likewiſe deny Apparitions.* So that I believe it may be juſtly ſaid, That many deny the Truth of 'em purely upon Account of their manifeſt Inconſiſtency with thoſe Libertine and *Epicurean* Schemes of Philoſophy, which they have raſhly embraced. Having once eſtabliſh'd theſe

in their Minds, as certain and undeniable Truths; whatever Opinions they perceive to diſagree with them, they immediately reject, without farther Examination, (one Error naturally begetting another,) as abſurd and impoſſible. I will not now diſpute with theſe; ſince, in order to convince them, it wou'd be neceſſary to prove the firſt Principles of Religion, which I deſign at preſent to ſuppoſe.

But there are others, who allowing the common Principles of Religion, as the Exiſtence of Spirits, the Immortality of the Soul, *&c.* yet deny the Reality of Apparitions. And theſe fetch their Objections either from the Providence of God, or the Nature and Condition of a ſeparate Spirit.

Firſt, They argue from the Providence of God; That 'tis not at all agreeable to the Wiſdom and Order wherewith he muſt be ſuppos'd to govern the World, to imagine that he ſhou'd ſuffer ſeparate Spirits to deſert their proper Habitations,

and rove about the Univerſe at Pleaſure, to terrify and diſturb Mankind. I anſwer; That 'tis uncertain whether that *Limbo* of ſeparate Spirits, which this Objection ſuppoſes, be not a mere *Utopia*; ſince, for what we know, they may not be confin'd to any fixt Abode; but are allow'd to range about the Univerſe. Perhaps it may be the Privilege of their Natures, to reſide where, and convey themſelves whither they pleaſe. And tho' it ſhou'd be imagin'd, that Evil Spirits are chain'd up and confin'd; yet it wou'd not from thence follow, that the Benevolent and Gentle ſuffer the ſame Reſtraint. And as for the Frights and Diſturbances which Apparitions may occaſion, (beſides that they are not very frequent,) I do not ſee, why God ſhou'd be ſuppos'd to be any more obliged to prevent them, than any other Evils, that happen in the World; eſpecially when 'tis conſider'd, that his Providence may by their means bring about ſome conſiderable Good to the Perſon to whom they appear, or to

others; and that, according to the Generality of Relations, their Buſineſs here is to cauſe Juſtice to be done to thoſe they left behind them.

Another Objection is; It is acknowledg'd by all, that a Spirit is Inviſible; Therefore there can be no ſuch thing as an *Apparition* of a Spirit. 'Tis very true, That a naked Spirit is Inviſible; or that a ſpiritual Subſtance is not the Object of Sight. But it does not follow from thence, that a Spirit cannot clothe it ſelf with ſuch a Body, as ſhall be Viſible; any more than it follows from the Soul of a living Man's being Inviſible, that the Body, to which it is united, is ſo too.

A Third, and indeed the moſt plauſible Objection of all, is this: How can it be ſuppos'd that a Spirit, if he was furniſh'd with proper Materials, cou'd have Art and Power ſufficient to form ſuch an Image, as ſhou'd not only exactly reſemble a Man in general, but even a particular Perſon? How ſhou'd he be able to move it, as we move our Bodies;

dies; and, without the Aſſiſtance of the Organs of Speech, ſo vibrate the Air, as that it ſhall ſtrike the Ear in ſuch a manner, as if articulate Sounds were utter'd by a human Voice? I ſay it may be objected, That if we ſhou'd ſuppoſe a Spirit to have never ſo good Tools and Materials, yet it wou'd be difficult to apprehend, how he ſhou'd have Skill and Power enough to perform all this: But that it is ſtill much more inconceivable, how, out of the fluid and tranſparent Air which ſurrounds him, he ſhou'd be able immediately to form a Body, of a particular Figure and Colour, and of ſuch a Degree of Denſity as to be clearly Viſible, and delude the Eye with the exact Appearance of a living Man.

To this I anſwer; That the Knowledge, Art and Power of Spirits being unknown to us, we cannot determine, with any Certainty, how far they may extend; and therefore ought not to pronounce any thing beyond the Reach of their Faculties, merely becauſe we are

not able to comprehend how they can perform it. Otherwiſe we may, perhaps, imitate thoſe, who, being ignorant of the Mathematicks, will no more be perſuaded that Aſtronomers can tell the Diſtance of the Moon from the Earth, than that they can take a Flight thither. What wonder if Spirits, who are probably ſo far exalted above us in Knowledge and Power, can do many things, which we cannot conceive poſſible to be done; when even ſome of us can do ſuch things, as utterly ſurpaſs the Comprehenſion of Others? If a Watch-maker ſhou'd tell a wild *Indian*, he cou'd make an Inſtrument, that wou'd regularly ſhew the Time of the Day to a Minute; I queſtion, whether he wou'd not think it as impoſſible, as any one can ſuppoſe the Apparition of Spirits. But, after all, if we ſhou'd allow it impoſſible for Spirits to render themſelves viſible by aſſuming corporeal Vehicles, there wou'd ſtill remain another way, whereby they might be conceiv'd to diſcover themſelves to us.

'Tis

'Tis prov'd in the *Carteſian* Philoſophy, that the Ideas of viſible Objects are annex'd, by our All-wiſe Creator, to certain Motions excited in the Brain by the Animal Spirits. By which means, we often ſeem to view Objects plainly before our Eyes, (as in Dreams or in a Fever,) which exiſt only in our own Imaginations.

In ſhort; *Imagination is only a faint and languid Senſation, and differs from it but in Degree.* And therefore, whenever the Brain is mov'd as violently, and in the ſame manner by ſome other Cauſe, as it wou'd have been by the Preſence of an Object acting upon it by the Senſes, we ſeem as evidently to ſee that Object, as if it were really preſent before us; which is the Caſe of Viſionaries and Madmen. Now from theſe Principles, it will be eaſie to account for the Apparition of Spirits, without ſuppoſing them to aſſume real viſible Bodies; for perhaps we may ſee them only by Imagination, ſince 'tis poſſible they may be ſo well acquainted with the

Laws

Laws of Union between the Soul and Body, as to know preciſely what Motions muſt be excited in the Brain, to produce particular Ideas in the Mind; and may likewiſe be endued with ſufficient Power to raiſe ſuch Motions as they find neceſſary. And ſince the Idea of Sound, as well as Viſion, ariſes in the Mind upon occaſion of certain Motions excited in the Auditory Nerves and in the Brain, it will be no difficult matter to conceive, that a Spirit, by raiſing ſuch Motions in the Organ of Hearing, as the Air, if agitated by a human Voice, wou'd excite, may produce in us ſuch Ideas of Sounds, and in ſuch Order as he pleaſes; and ſo not only appear, but ſpeak to us. And from hence likewiſe it will be eaſie to give a Reaſon of that which is aſſerted to have happen'd, in ſome Accounts of Apparitions; *viz.* That a Man has beheld a Spirit, when, at the ſame time, one that was in Company with him cou'd not ſee it, tho' he turn'd his Eye towards the Place, where it ſeem'd to the other to ſtand. For he that cou'd not ſee

it,

it, not having the ſame Motions excited in his Brain as the other, had not by Conſequence the ſame Ideas preſented to his Mind.

What has hitherto been ſaid, was deſign'd to anſwer only ſuch Objections as tend to prove, That Spirits want the *Power* of diſcloſing themſelves to us. But perhaps it may be farther objected; That, ſuppoſing they have the *Power*, it wou'd be abſurd to imagine, they ſhou'd have the *Will* to maintain any Correſpondence with us. And to this Purpoſe it may be argued, That ſince a Spirit, when diſlodg'd from the Body, enters into a new State, and a new Scene of things, it is reaſonable to think, that he ſhou'd likewiſe put on new Thoughts and Affections, and either entirely forget, or deſpiſe the Affairs and Concernments of this lower World. I anſwer; That 'tis impoſſible for us to know with any Certainty, but that Spirits (ſome of them at leaſt) may retain many of thoſe Affections and Inclinations after Death, which they had whilſt

whilſt Living. Who can preſume to ſay that a Man, who heartily lov'd his Friends and Relations, will not carry the ſame Affection with him to the other World? Or pretend to be certain, that neither this, nor any other Paſſion will engage him to intermeddle with the Affairs of Men? Beſides, their concerning themſelves with us may proceed from Deſires very juſt and reaſonable, and ſuch as 'tis not abſurd to ſuppoſe in the moſt refin'd and perfect Spirits; as, for Inſtance, that of ſeeing their Wills duly executed, and their Friends poſſeſs'd of thoſe Goods which they bequeath'd them.

Thus having remov'd the Objections that are made againſt the *Poſſibility* of Apparitions, there remains nothing more to be done, in order to prove their *Reality*, than to produce ſome good and unexceptionable Teſtimonies. But that Part I refer to You, and remain,

Dear SIR,

Your moſt obliged
humble Servant,
H. NEEDLER.

To Mr. * *

Portſmouth, *November* 4, 1711.

SIR,

I No ſooner perceiv'd, by your laſt Letter, that a Poem to the Memory of your worthy Mother wou'd be acceptable to You, but I immediately ſet my ſelf to compoſe one. And having now finiſh'd it, ſuch as it is I preſent it to You; comforting myſelf chiefly with the Thought, that tho' the Performance ſhou'd in itſelf prove never ſo mean, the Subject on which it is writ, cannot fail to recommend it to ſome degree of your Eſteem; As Reliques are highly valu'd, not from any intrinſick Excellency they are ſuppos'd to have in themſelves, but merely from the Relation they bear to the belov'd Object.

To

To the Memory of FAVONIA.

In Blank Verſe.

——Illic poſtquam ſe Lumine vero
Implevit, ſtellaſque vagas miratur, & aſtra
Fixa polis, videt quantâ ſub Nocte jaceret
Noſtra Dies.—— *Lucan.*

COU'D Piety and Virtue aught avail
To turn aſide the never-erring Dart
Of Unrelenting Death, Favonia *ſtill*
Had bleſs'd her Family, Secure of Life.
Pure was her Soul as Native Light, unſoil'd
With Vapours foul; Mild as balmy Zephyrs,
Which fan with fragrant Breath the Vernal
Flow'rs;
Benevolent as thoſe bright Minds above,
To whoſe triumphant Choir She now is fled.
As ſome fair Star adorns the lucid Sky,
And for a while diffuſes all around
Its Influence benign; then diſappears,
Extinguiſh'd to the Sight; But, when the
Heav'ns
Have rowl'd their deſtin'd Courſe, renews its
Lamp, *And*

And with its ſparkling Splendor chears the Night:
Thus ſhall Favonia *with freſh Luſtre riſe,*
At the laſt Trumpet's far-reſounding Voice,
And eminently ſhine among the Bleſt.
Then blame not thou, with over-fond Complaints,
Th' Awards of Providence, from Error free.
Favonia's *Virtues and Indulgent Love*
May juſtly claim ſome Tears: Yet learn to check
Th' Exceſs of Grief; nor vainly give a Looſe
To Paſſion wild: But chear thy drooping Mind,
With the bright Thoughts of that tranſporting Bliſs
Celeſtial, which o'erflows her raviſh'd Soul!
No ling'ring Fever now, no ſecret Flame
By ſlow Degrees conſumes her Vital Store.
No pale Diſeaſe can reach that Sacred Place
Where She is now arriv'd. There chearful Health,
And ever-blooming Youth, Immortal ſmile!
Think with what Joy, what Rapture exquiſite,
'Midſt thouſand proſtrate Seraphs She adores

The

The Sovereign-Majeſty of Heav'n and Earth;
And humbly in his glorious Eſſence views
Th' Eternal Forms of All; the Model fair
Of Nature's lovely Frame; the deep-laid Plan,
By which th' Almighty rais'd this beauteous
World:
Think with what Tranſports of refin'd Delight,
At this pure Source of Everlaſting Truth,
She'll quench her eager Intellectual Thirſt,
With Copious Draughts of Science infinite.
Thoſe Myſteries profound, which Darkneſs thick
Conceals from human View, with piercing Eye,
In open Light diſclos'd, She clearly ſees.
But whither do I rove? What Sacred Rage
Tranſports my Earth-born Muſe, thus to
preſume,
With Mortal Wing, audaciouſly to climb
Etherial Heights, and paint that boundleſs Bliſs,
Which None, but thoſe who taſte it, can con-
ceive?
Forbear, vain Muſe, forbear. Let Angels ſing
Immortal Joys, which Angels only know!
With this be Thou content; Favonia's *bleſs'd,*
Beyond what Thought can frame, or Tongue
deſcribe.

I am, in the next Place, to anſwer your Queſtion; *viz. Whether the Souls of deceas'd Friends and Relatives may be ſuppos'd to have any Acquaintance with one another?* I am of Opinion that they have; which I ground upon the following Reaſons.

Firſt, It is probable, that Spirits, after their Separation from the Body, retain the Memory of thoſe things which they knew in this Life.

Secondly, It is equally reaſonable to believe, that they have ſome Means of communicating their Thoughts to one another.

If we allow any of the Narratives of Apparitions to be true, the firſt is prov'd in Fact; for the things therein affirm'd to have been done by Spirits, manifeſtly ſhew, that they had a Remembrance of what they knew before their Death. This Propoſition might likewiſe be prov'd from that Text, where the * Souls of the Martyrs under the Altar are repreſented as calling upon God to avenge their Blood

* *Rev.* vi. 9, 10.

upon their Perſecutors. Beſides, if Death, like the *Lethean* Draught of the Poets, extinguiſhes the Memory of paſt Tranſactions, neither can the Virtuous be comforted, nor the Wicked tormented with the conſcious Remembrance of their Lives, and the Proſpect of future Rewards and Puniſhments, as our moſt judicious Divines ſuppoſe they are. This Point therefore being ſufficiently prov'd, let us proceed to the next, *viz.* To ſhew;

That 'tis reaſonable to believe, Separate Spirits have ſome Correſpondence or Communication of Sentiments with one another. Here it muſt be confeſs'd, That we are not able to conceive how, without the Aſſiſtance of Bodily Organs, one Spirit ſhou'd impart his Thoughts to another. But, beſides that for aught we know they may be cloth'd with ſome ſort of Bodies, we ought never to pronounce any thing impoſſible, merely becauſe it ſurpaſſes the Reach of our narrow Conceptions to comprehend *how* it can be effected.

Since

Since therefore it does not appear impoſſible for Spirits to converſe together; and ſince it is ſo very reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that the Beneficent Creator has not denied them a Faculty ſo neceſſary to the Perfection and Happineſs of a finite Intelligence, as this ſeems to be; we ought to conclude, That they do actually communicate their Thoughts to one another. But whoever grants theſe two Points, *viz.* That Spirits have a Remembrance of what they formerly knew, and that they converſe together; cannot in Reaſon deny this Conſequence; That the Souls of departed Friends and Relatives have a Knowledge of one another, as ſuch; or that they know one another to have been ſuch Perſons, as they really were, in this Life. For this is contain'd in the Suppoſition of their communicating to one another ſuch part of their Remembrance of what happen'd to them, as may diſcover who they are.

I return you many Thanks for the Poems you procur'd to entertain me, in

your laſt Letter. Mr. *H*——*s* did very well, after having beſtow'd on my Verſes ſuch undeſerv'd Commendation, to ſend me ſome of his own; that ſo, by comparing the Elegance of his poliſh'd Lines, with the Rudeneſs and Imperfection of mine, I might be kept from being too much elated with the Approbation of ſo good a Critick.

I am, Dear SIR,

Your moſt obliged humble Servant,

H. NEEDLER.

To Mr. * *

Portſmouth, *Nov.* 11, 1711.

* * * * * * * *

* * * * * * * * *

* * * * You may perceive hereby, that however diſpleas'd I may be with ſuch Authors, as by a *falſe* and *voluntary Humility* degrade human Nature below the Station, which God has graciouſly

ciouſly vouchſaf'd to give it in the World, yet I am not at all backward to acknowledge thoſe Imperfections, that appear really to belong to it. As it is an Inſtance of ridiculous Pride and Vanity, to aſcribe thoſe Perfections to our Natures, whereof they are not capable; So is it no leſs unreaſonable and abſurd, ſpontaneouſly to renounce and diveſt our ſelves of thoſe Excellencies and Endowments, with which our bountiful Creator has been pleas'd to grace us. And I am of Opinion, that Nothing is more prejudicial to Morality, (not even Pride itſelf,) than ſuch a *falſe Humility*. For what Principles of Morality can that Man embrace, who (with *Seigneur de Montaigne*,) entertains too mean an Opinion of human Nature, to believe his Soul to be an Immortal, Free Agent, capable of diſtinguiſhing between True and Falſe, Good and Evil?

But to return to the * *Spermatick Worms*:

* *See the* 11*th Chapter of a Book, Entitled,* De la Generation des Vers dans le Corps de l'Homme. Par Monſieur Andry.

On this Occaſion, I cannot forbear beſtowing ſome Praiſes on that moſt admirable Invention, the *Microſcope*; by which we firſt learn'd the Exiſtence of 'em. What wonderful Diſcoveries have been made by the Help of this Noble Inſtrument! How many beautiful and ſurpriſing Works of the All-wiſe Creator, had for ever lain conceal'd in their own * Minuteneſs, if this had not diſcover'd them to us? By this artificial Eye, we are enabled to look into a thouſand Curioſities, of which our Natural Sight cou'd have given us no Information; to pry into the moſt ſecret Receſſes of Nature, and examine the artful Mechaniſm and Organick Contexture of the ſmalleſt Creatures. This has aſſur'd us, that the Animal World is much larger than is commonly imagin'd; that

" * Our weak Eyes, help'd by mechanick Art, diſco-
" cover in theſe Works a hidden Scene of Wonders;
" Worlds within Worlds, of infinite Minuteneſs, tho' as
" to Art ſtill equal to the greateſt, and pregnant with more
" Wonders, than the moſt diſcerning Senſe, join'd with
" the greateſt Art or the acuteſt Reaſon, can penetrate or
" unfold. *Earl of* Shaftesbury.

that every Corner of Nature is ſtock'd and crowded with infinite Numbers of little Inhabitants; and that there are more Inſects, imperceptible to the naked Eye, in a Drop of Vinegar, than there are Men upon the Earth. And what Wonder? When this terreſtrial Globe, which we think ſo vaſt, is, in Compariſon of the boundleſs Extenſion of the Univerſe, only a little Atom, ſwimming among Myriads of others in the liquid *Æther*; and we may be conſider'd as the Inſects, who poſſeſs and inhabit it. The Circulation of the Blood is alſo a Diſcovery owing to this Inſtrument.

Nor is *Phyſick* the only Art, that is beholden to the Improvement of Glaſſes. *Aſtronomy* has likewiſe received great Advantage by the *Teleſcope*. This has plainly ſhew'd us, that the Moon is only another Earth; diverſified, like this, with Sea and Land, Mountains and Valleys, *&c.* This has enlarged our View of the Univerſe, and not only ſhew'd us in the Heavens thoſe things *more diſtinctly*, which

we ſaw there before, but even *new Stars* and *Planets* inviſible to the naked Eye. Witneſs the *Milky Way*, which the Ancients took for a white Cloud or Vapour; but it is now found to be a large Quantity of *fix'd Stars*, which appear diſtinct through the Teleſcope. Thoſe *ſecondary Planets*, the *Satellites* of *Jupiter*, and ſome *primary Planets* have not only been diſcover'd by it; but the Revolutions and Eclipſes alſo of thoſe Moons, are now as exactly calculated, as thoſe of our own.

It wou'd be endleſs to enumerate all the Diſcoveries, which have been made by means of theſe Inſtruments. I will not therefore attempt it; but, for what remains, refer you to Dr. *Hook*'s *Micrographia*; And ſubſcribe myſelf

Your faithful Friend

and Servant,

H. NEEDLER.

To

To Mr. *H.*

Portſmouth, *November* 1711.

WHEN I intimated to you my Deſign, of ſending you in a Letter thoſe imperfect Reflections and Obſervations I had made, on a curſory Peruſal of Mr. *Norris*'s *Theory of the Ideal World*, You was pleas'd to expreſs your Approbation of it; which makes me willing to lay hold on this Opportunity, to perform my Promiſe. I will refer what I have to offer concerning Mr. *Norris*'s *Theory*, to theſe three Heads, *viz. Firſt*, The Certainty; *Secondly*, The Uſefulneſs and Importance; And, *Thirdly*, The Beauty and Excellency of it: Which are the three Qualifications, that uſually recommend an Author to our Eſteem. And all theſe, in a very eminent Manner, concur in this excellent Work. As, upon a little Conſideration of it, will, I doubt not, clearly appear.

And

And, *Firſt*; As to the Certainty of this Ideal Theory. There are, I believe, very few Syſtems of ſo Abſtract and Metaphyſical a Nature, that can vie with it, either in reſpect of the Number, or Clearneſs of the Arguments, on which it is built. Mr. *Norris* has uſed no other Arguments, than ſuch as are ſtrictly Concluſive, and even Mathematically Demonſtrative. And yet he has proved the Exiſtence of *The Ideal World* by no leſs than ſix diſtinct Methods of Demonſtration. And that Syſtem muſt ſurely be allow'd to have a good and ſolid Foundation, which is ſupported by ſo many invincible Arguments; and not to be ſo mere a Caſtle in the Air, ſo vain and chymerical a Structure, as ſome Men imagine. Though (as he juſtly obſerves,) the real Exiſtence of it be far more certain, than even That of the ſenſible World, in which we live. But becauſe this Aſſertion will ſeem very ſtrange, if not incredible, to one who has not been accuſtom'd to theſe Speculations, I will endeavour,

deavour, before I proceed, briefly to prove the Truth of it. And, for that Purpoſe, I deſire no more than this One Conceſſion, *viz.* *That the Exiſtence of the Ideal World is ſtrictly demonſtrable.* For if I can prove, that the Exiſtence of the Natural and Senſible World is not ſtrictly and properly demonſtrable, it neceſſarily follows, That the Certainty of the Exiſtence of the *Ideal*, exceeds that of the *Natural* World. But that the Exiſtence of the Natural World is not * ſtrictly demonſtrable, will appear from hence, That there is no neceſſary Connexion between thoſe Ideas which we have of External Objects, and the Exiſtence of thoſe Objects; for all Philoſophers allow, that we ſee External Objects by certain Species or Ideas, which repreſent them to us, and not immediately by themſelves; but now our ſeeing theſe

" * *Thought* we own pre-eminent, and confeſs the realleſt
" of Beings; the only Exiſtence of which we are made ſure,
" by being conſcious. All elſe may be only Dream and
" Shadow. All which even *Senſe* ſuggeſts may be deceit-
" ful. The SENSE *it-ſelf* remains ſtill: REASON ſubſiſts:
" and THOUGHT maintains its *Elderſhip* of Being. Thus
" are we in a manner conſcious of that *original* and *eter-*
" *nally exiſtent* THOUGHT whence we derive *our own.*
Earl of Shaftesbury.

theſe Species or Ideas, can only aſſure us of their own Exiſtence, and not of the Exiſtence of thoſe things, which they exhibit; there being no Neceſſary Connexion (as I obſerv'd before,) between the Exiſtence of an Idea, and the real Exiſtence of the thing it repreſents; any more than there is between the Exiſtence of a Picture, and the Exiſtence of ſome Perſon like it; for if there was, then all things wou'd be Neceſſary, becauſe 'tis demonſtrable (which is the very Suppoſition this Argument proceeds upon,) that the Ideas of all things are neceſſary. It appears then, that we cannot ſtrictly demonſtrate the Exiſtence of External Objects, from the Ideas which we have of them; becauſe Nothing can be demonſtrated from another, unleſs it has a Neceſſary Connexion with it, which the Natural Exiſtence of things has not with their Ideal Exiſtence; And conſequently it will follow, (ſince this is the only Argument pretended to be demonſtrative of the Natural Exiſtence of things,) That the Exiſtence of the *Ideal*,

is

is far more Certain and Evident, than that of the *Natural* and *Senſible World*. Having ſufficiently ſhewn the Strength of the Baſis, on which this Ideal Fabrick is founded, I proceed in the next place to prove,

Secondly, The Uſefulneſs and Importance of the Ideal Syſtem. And if Truth and Science, if Religion and the eternal Reaſons of Moral Good and Evil are Matters of any Importance, then muſt this Theory, on which they all ultimately reſt, be eſteem'd ſo likewiſe. So that Nothing can be imagin'd more proper for the Support of Religion, than this Ideal Philoſophy. I cannot pretend here to make out and explain all this, but for that muſt refer you to the Book it ſelf; as not deſigning to write an Abſtract of it, but only to give you ſome Account of my Thoughts concerning it.

Thirdly, As to the Beauty and Excellency of the Subject; I do not believe it poſſible to find any, in the whole Field of Contemplation, more apt to fill a Man's

Mind with Great and Sublime Ideas, with Divine and Angelick Speculations. How Noble and Rational a Notion does it give us of the Beatifick Viſion, which it makes to conſiſt in a clear Intellectual View of that Eternal Mind, who comprehends all Truth in his Omniform Eſſence; in whom the uncreated Ideas of all things, eternally ſhine forth with an unclouded Splendor; who in his Infinite Eſſence, as in a bright Intelligible Mirrour, beholds, in One Comprehenſive View, the whole Actuality, and even Poſſibility of Being; who is eternally Happy in the ſole Contemplation of Himſelf; and the Viſion of whom is truly Beatifick to all created Minds; who, as He cannot but be ſufficient for the *Will*, as containing all Good, is likewiſe an Object no leſs ſatisfactory and filling to the *Underſtanding*, as containing all Truth and all that is Intelligible.

How Glorious and Happy, according to theſe Principles, muſt the State of an Angel or ſeparate Spirit be; who is admitted to drink at the Spring-Head of Truth,

Truth, and to quench his Intellectual Thirſt with the living Streams of Eternal Wiſdom! What fervent Deſires, what ardent Aſpirations, does this faint Glimpſe of the Happineſs of the ſeparate State excite in the Soul, after the full and compleat Poſſeſſion and Enjoyment of it? How does She long to have this groſs *Medium* of her Mortal Body remov'd, that ſo She may without a Veil, with a fixt and attentive Eye, contemplate the naked Beauty of Original Truth and Wiſdom?

O *Wiſdom!* how boundleſs are thy Treaſures? how inexhauſtible thy Stores? who doſt afford ſufficient Matter for the eternal Contemplation of an Infinite Mind; and whoſe pure Fountains perpetually quench the Thirſt of the whole Intelligent Creation, without being in the leaſt diminiſh'd. How ſhou'd we be tranſported with thy Divine Beauties? how raviſh'd with thy Charms, if thoſe thick Films of Mortality, which now, like Clouds, intercept thy Rays, and conceal thee

thee from our Sight, were once remov'd; and we admitted to a clear and open Viſion of thee? Thou wou'dſt ſo attract and employ all our Thoughts, that outward Objects wou'd be diſregarded by us. Thus Separate Minds and Unembodied Spirits contemplate and enjoy thee. No ſenſible Impreſſions diſturb their deep attentive Meditations. No heavy Maſs of ill-organiz'd Matter clogs and depreſſes their Minds, and reſtrains the Native Energy of their Thoughts; but free and unconfin'd as Air, active and nimble as Light, they apply their ſagacious Minds to the Contemplation of Truth, without Satiety or Wearineſs. Nor are they, like us, confin'd to a certain Sett of Ideas, a particular Incloſure of Knowledge, ſo much only as is neceſſary for us in our preſent State; but are ſuffer'd to range at large and without Reſtraint in the Intellectual World; to expatiate freely in the infinite Regions of Truth, and to ſelect what Objects they pleaſe for their Contemplation.

Thus

Thus You ſee what excellent Matter this Theory affords for the moſt exalted Speculations; which was the third and laſt Particular I propos'd to illuſtrate.

Upon the whole, I think I may juſtly conclude, That Mr. *Norris's Theory of the Ideal World*, (how extravagant and enthuſiaſtick ſoever his Notions may appear to thoſe, who have not been converſant in *Metaphyſical* Enquiries,) is really an admirable Performance; as being in reſpect either of the Certainty, Uſefulneſs or Dignity of the Subject, ſcarce inferior to any other. His Thoughts are Great and Sublime, yet Eaſy and Perſpicuous; his Fancy is Beautiful and Entertaining; and his Way of Reaſoning, for the moſt part, Juſt and Exact.

I am

Your ſincere Friend

and Servant,

H. NEEDLER.

To Mr. *D.*

Portſmouth, *November* 20, 1711.

SIR,

I Have been of late ſo afflicted with a Pain in my Head, (which ſtill continues, tho' not ſo violent as it was,) that I was utterly uncapable of making my Returns as uſual; which Failure therefore I hope you will excuſe. I have nothing now to preſent you with, but a ſhort Hymn, which I writ during my Illneſs.

I.

Why art thou thus with Grief oppreſt,
My deſtitute, afflicted Soul?
What anxious Fears diſturb thy Reſt,
And all thy brighter Thoughts controul?

II.

Let chearful Hope, with dawning Light,
Diſpel each black and gloomy Care;
And from thy Breaſt, with ſudden Flight,
Drive far the Form of foul Deſpair.

III. *Liſt*

III.

Lift up thine Eyes. Above, behold!
Eternal Goodneſs ſits inthron'd:
Tho' Sorrow for a Night may hold,
With ſpringing Joy the Morning's crown'd.

IV.

Let not the Weight of preſent Ill
To impious Doubts thy Thoughts incline.
Truſt in th' Almighty's Favour ſtill;
On Him with humble Hope recline.

V.

To all thy Pray'rs and ſecret Sighs
He will not ever Deaf remain:
He will ere-long, with pitying Eyes,
Look down, and heal thy piercing Pain.

VI.

He, when as yet thou Nothing wert,
By his own high Perfections mov'd,
To Thee a Being did impart,
And with a Father's Kindneſs lov'd.

VII.

The Fulneſs of his Joy Supreme
Could not by Men receive Increaſe;
His gracious End in making them,
Was to beſtow diffuſive Bliſs.

I am,

SIR,

Your ſincere humble Servant,

H. NEEDLER.

To Mr. *D.*

Portſmouth, *December* 3, 1711.

Dear SIR,

I Have always thought the many Inſtances and Tokens of Reaſon and Deſign, which are commonly obſerv'd in the Actions and Behaviour of Brutes, ſufficient to refute the *Carteſian* Opinion of their merely Mechanical Nature. And I have been lately confirm'd in my Oppoſition

ſition to that Notion, by the odd Humour of a Horſe, which formerly work'd in this Yard; who wou'd labour very diligently, till he heard the twelve-a-Clock Bell ring; But after that, nothing cou'd prevail with him to proceed. As if he thought, he had then perform'd his due Task, and was reſolv'd not to be impos'd upon.

For my Part, when I conſider this, and ſuch-like Actions of Brutes, I cannot but attribute to them ſome Degree of Knowledge and Reaſon. My Friend *H*---- is of Opinion, that they are Men in Diſguiſe, like the Companions of *Ulyſſes* enchanted by *Circe*; That their Souls are originally and intrinſically as perfect and excellent as ours; and that all the Difference between us and them, ariſes merely from the diſadvantageous Organization of their Bodies, which are not ſo well diſpos'd to aſſiſt their Souls in their intellectual Operations, as ours. So that, according to him, if the Soul of *Socrates* had been lodg'd in a Hog, inſtead of a

human Body, it wou'd never have arriv'd to any Attainments beyond thoſe of its Fellow-Animals. This was likewiſe the Opinion of the Ancient *Pythagoreans* and *Metempſychoſiſts*. But this Notion runs as far into the other Extreme, and exalts the Nature of Brutes as much too high, as the *Carteſian* Hypotheſis ſinks it too low.

I am rather for taking the middle Way, and aſcribing to them a Soul and Faculties naturally inferior to the human; which ſeems to me moſt agreeable to Reaſon. It muſt however be acknowledg'd, that little can be offer'd in this Matter, but what is diſputable and uncertain. We know not enough of their inward Natures and Eſſences, to determine almoſt any thing with Certainty concerning 'em.

In the mean time we may be admoniſh'd of our own Ignorance, by the Darkneſs we are in with reſpect to this Subject; who are not able to comprehend the Nature of the pooreſt Inſect, nor poſitively

poſitively to define, from what Source its vital Motions and Actions proceed. All things are full of impenetrable Myſteries! All Nature is but one great Riddle, which it utterly ſurpaſſes the Force of human Intellect to ſolve! The moſt obvious things, when cloſely conſider'd, are found intangled with inſuperable Difficulties. The leaſt of all the Beings that ſurround us, is capable of baffling the utmoſt Force of the moſt inlarg'd Underſtanding.

Nor are we better acquainted with ourſelves, than with foreign Exiſtences. We are no where more ignorant than at home. The Mechaniſm of our Bodies is too intricate a Work, for our narrow Faculties to comprehend it. Perhaps no other Mind, but that Divine Author's who compos'd it, can underſtand its whole Anatomy and Organick Structure. Phyſicians every Day diſpute about the moſt conſiderable Queſtions, relating to the Oeconomy of the human Body. They are not yet agreed concerning the manner of

Digeſtion, or the Cauſe of the Dilatation and Contraction of the Heart. So imperfect is our Knowledge of this exterior Part of our-ſelves!

But let us ſee, whether we are any better acquainted with what is more truly *our-ſelf*; *viz.* that Conſcious Being, which we call our Soul. The Body is not really *the Man*; but the Soul is his proper and individual Being. Of this therefore, it may be well expected, we ſhou'd have a more intimate Knowledge. But, alas! there is Nothing, on the contrary, with which we are leſs acquainted. We are indeed conſcious of its Operations. But as to the Nature and Subſtance of that Being from whence they flow, we are almoſt entirely in the Dark. Nor are we leſs ignorant, how theſe Two, ſo different Beings of Soul and Body, are join'd together. Nothing ſeems to us more Myſterious than that wonderful Union. We know by repeated Experience, That when we will that our Arm ſhou'd move, it is accordingly

dingly mov'd, in ſuch manner as we deſire. But why that Effect ſhou'd follow the Act of our Will, we are unable to conceive. We know likewiſe, That if any ſound Part of our Body be prick'd with a Pin, we ſhall immediately feel Pain. But what Connection, what Relation there can be, between the Prick of a Pin in the Body, and a Senſation of Pain in the Soul; we know not. What wonder then, that, ignorant as we are of our-ſelves and our own Natures, we cannot diſcover the hidden Conſtitution of other Animals, and things without us. Since we do not know our-ſelves, we ought not to think it ſtrange, that we are unacquainted with the Eſſences of External Beings.

God has been pleas'd to afford us, in this World, only a ſmall Taſte, as it were, of Knowledge, to excite and quicken our Endeavours after it. In the next, we hope to be fully ſatisfied with the Angelick Food; to know clearly our-ſelves and other Beings; but chiefly to be made for ever

ever happy, by the Viſion of that All-glorious and All-beautiful Eſſence, who is all in all; and whom to know, is to know all things, becauſe he contains in Himſelf the Ideas of all; even the Eternal Fountain of Being, the Self-exiſtent Incomprehenſible Creator!

I return you many Thanks for ſending me the fine * *Philoſophical Meditation* of my Lord *Shaftesbury*; for, from the Hints you give me, I ſuppoſe him to be the Author of it. You was not miſtaken in believing I ſhou'd be extremely pleas'd with it. I read it over with abundance of Pleaſure, and (as you expreſs yourſelf,) in a *ſort of Rapture*; ſtruck with Delight and Admiration by the Majeſty and Beauty of the Thoughts, and the flowing Harmonious Eloquence of Expreſſion! I have found by Experience the Truth of what you likewiſe obſerv'd, that *Enthuſiaſm is catching*; for upon peruſing this *Meditation*, with which I was thus deeply affected,

* *See the* Meditation *in the third Part of* The Moraliſts, A Philoſophical Rhapſody. *Printed in* 1709.

affected, I was my-ſelf ſeiz'd with a Fit of it; which occaſion'd the following Thoughts; wherein I ſuppoſe my-ſelf, on a Summer's Evening, in ſome retir'd Place in the Country.

Hail ſacred Solitude and Silence, propitious Powers to Thought and Contemplation! How calm and ſtill is the Night! How clear the Sky! What a numberleſs Multitude of Stars, diſplay their various Splendors; uniting to adorn the Firmament! We may well excuſe the Night, for veiling from our View, in dim Confuſion, the Beauties of the neighbouring Fields and Woods, while thus it opens to our raviſh'd Eyes, ſo lovely a Spectacle; inviſible by Day. O bright and magnificent Scene of Nature! O glorious Work of the Almighty Architect! Fair Copy of the Divine Ideas, and Image of the Deity!

Every one of theſe ſparkling Orbs is probably, like our Sun, the Center of a diſtinct Syſtem of Planets, that dance their Airy Rounds inceſſantly about it. How vaſt a Syſtem then is the Univerſe! Profuſe Beneficence! Luxuriant Bounty!

Great

Great and Excellent, and Worthy of their Author, are all thy Works, O thou adorable Creator of all things! Who can define the Bounds of thy Creation; or circumſcribe thy Goodneſs? Innumerable Worlds continually depend upon thy Providence. Thy Arm ſuſtains the Univerſal Frame of Nature. Shou'dſt Thou withdraw thy All-ſupporting Power, theſe glittering Stars wou'd be extinguiſh'd; and Night *regain the infinite Expanſe.*

From Thee, theſe glowing Spangles of the Sky derive their Luſtre; not half ſo beautiful as Thou, Great Archetype *of all things lovely! The Splendor of theſe material Lights is but a faint Shadow of thy Eſſential and Immaterial Glory, of the Brightneſs of thy Infinite Wiſdom and All-penetrating Intellect!*

'Tis Thou, that mad'ſt, and govern'ſt all this Multitude of Worlds. Thy Ever-wakeful and Ever-active Providence, *inviolably maintains the conſtant Courſe of Nature, and executes her wiſe and wholeſom Laws, thro' all the wide Creation. 'Tis Thy Almighty Arm, that whirls around the Orbs in their Eter-*

nal Motions; True Soul of Nature, and Vital Principle of all things! Unmov'd and Unchangeable Thy-ſelf, by a Silent and Secret, but Unreſiſted Force, Thou produceſt all the Motions and Viciſſitudes of Nature, guided by Rules and Meaſures, that are the Dictates of thy own unerring Wiſdom. This Earth of ours, that now ſo ſwiftly rowls, (ſhou'dſt Thou withdraw thy Hand, to which it owes its Motion,) immediately wou'd ſtop; and leave this Hemiſphere involv'd in Endleſs Night. Without Thee, this Goodly Frame of the Univerſe, were but a Lifeleſs Maſs of Matter, a Body without a Soul. Thou mingleſt thy-ſelf (as it were) with the Matter of the World; Thy Ever-active and Omnipotent Power inſpires the Whole; infuſing Life and Motion into all its Parts.

I am, Dear SIR,

Your moſt affectionate

humble Servant,

H. NEEDLER.

London,

London, *June* 15, 1717.

Dear SIR,

HAving receiv'd your obliging Letter, I went on *Tueſday*, according to Appointment, to viſit Mr. *H----s*; But, to my Surpriſe, was inform'd, that he was very ill, and juſt fallen aſleep. He is, it ſeems, relaps'd into his Fever.

I return'd home melancholy and diſappointed, reflecting upon the Imperfection and Uncertainty of all earthly Happineſs. How many Advantages (ſaid I to my-ſelf,) muſt concur in a ſingle Perſon, to render him compleatly happy? Nature, Virtue and Fortune muſt each contribute their Share; and if any one of theſe fails to bring in its *Quota*, his Happineſs is Lame and Imperfect. And how rarely do we find them all conſpiring to favour the ſame Perſon? Suppoſe him endu'd by Nature, with a clear Underſtanding; by the Principles of Virtue, with Piety, Juſtice, and the moſt improv'd

prov'd Humanity; poſſeſs'd of the Eſteem and Love of all that know him; yet if *Health* be wanting; if a *Fever* revel in his Veins and exhale his Spirits, how little Taſte or Enjoyment can he have of all the reſt? The *Stoicks* indeed thought *Virtue* alone ſufficient to *Happineſs*; and thence concluded, That ſince it is in Every Man's Power to be *Virtuous*, it is alſo in Every Man's Power to be *Happy*. But, alas! every Day's Experience too clearly proves the Vanity of this Notion. Human Life is liable to many Miſeries, which all our *Virtue* and *Prudence* can neither prevent nor remedy. They may indeed, in ſome meaſure, contribute to ſupport and buoy us up under theſe fatal Calamities; but to remove 'em entirely, is beyond their Power.

Theſe are ſome of the Reflections which aroſe in my Mind on that Occaſion. I will not trouble you with any more of 'em at preſent; But conclude with giving you Thanks for your elegant

gant Tranſlation from *Horace*; which was very acceptable (as every thing from You is,) to,

SIR,

Your moſt oblig'd,

and moſt affectionate

humble Servant,

H. NEEDLER.

FINIS.